

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE UNIONS

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2009

• EUROPEAN
FEDERATION
OF PUBLIC
SERVICE
UNIONS

• FEDERACIÓN
SINDICAL
EUROPEA DE
SERVICIOS
PÚBLICOS

• FÉDÉRATION
SYNDICALE
EUROPÉENNE
DES SERVICES
PUBLICS

• EUROPEISKA
FEDERATIONEN
FÖR ÖFFENTLIG
ANSTÄLLDAS
FÖRBUND

• EUROPÄISCHER
GEWERKSCHAFTS-
VERBAND FÜR DEN
ÖFFENTLICHEN
DIENST

• ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ
ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ
ПРОФСОЮЗОВ
ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО
ОБСЛУЖИВАНИЯ

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Introduction

The EPSU 2009 Report of Activities differs from previous reports. This new reporting format we aims to provide a shorter, easier to read and more analytic digest of the work undertaken.

We continued our lobbying and campaigning work in 2009 around the working time directive, the draft directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, on the energy emission trading scheme, climate change and sustainable development and social dialogue and many other subjects.

We celebrated some major achievements:

- Trade union pressure was instrumental in influencing debate on working time and the proposed healthcare directive; the Commission could not proceed on these issues as they initially intended.*
- The 2 year test phase of social dialogue in the national administration sector was concluded with a positive evaluation; we continue our work towards formalization of the social dialogue in this sector;*
- We negotiated a framework agreement on the prevention of injuries and infections from medical sharps in the hospital and healthcare sector in the record time of six months. The social partner agreement is expected to become a binding directive in the first semester of 2010.*

Everything was overshadowed by the fall-out of the financial and economic crisis that started in 2008 and now increasingly affects employment in the public sector in a growing number of European countries and has very serious consequences for public budgets. The social partners in Local and Regional Government adopted a joint statement underlining the need for a sustained funding base for local government authorities at a time where demands from the population are growing.

2009 was an EPSU Congress year. The eighth EPSU Congress took place from 8 to 11 June in Brussels. Importantly it laid the foundation for the merger between EPSU and PSI Europe to take effect as of January 2010, with EPSU now spanning the entire European continent and bringing the total number of affiliated unions to 274.

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel

Section I: Main political developments

Financial and Economic Crisis

The profound impact of the economic and financial crisis and its devastating consequences for working men and women throughout the economy fully unfolded in 2009. Large groups of public service workers are threatened with job losses, wage freezes or even wage cuts. Several governments, local authorities and other public bodies have proposed to open up collective agreements that provided wage developments for the next 2 or 3 years. Public sector pay and pensions are attacked, losing sight of the fact that the vast majority of workers are low and middle-income earners who deliver essential services to Europe's populations and businesses. Given that many women work in healthcare, education and social services, imposed pay restraints on the public sector are likely to undo years of work to reduce pay gaps.

Many public service workers have taken to the streets to demand for an alternative policy and an end to the neo-liberal policies, a major root cause of the crisis. The May actions coordinated by the ETUC in Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and Prague drew massive support for the ETUC New Social Agenda proposals.

Working Time Directive¹

The struggle on the further development of the Working Time Directive has remained at the top of the European trade union agenda. As a reminder: after a successful campaign, including a powerful ETUC demonstration in Strasbourg, the European Parliament voted on 17 December 2008 by an absolute majority for the end of the individual opt-out from the Working Time Directive. This vote confirmed the trade union movement position that the Working Time Directive is to protect workers, who should not be exploited by working excessively long hours in one stretch and that on-call duty at the workplace must be considered as working time. The conciliation procedure to reach an agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the revision of the Working Time Directive failed at the end of April 2009.

On the initiative of EPSU and the other trade union federations, the ETUC adopted the following declaration at its Executive Committee meeting of 8 July:

“After the failure to reach agreement on a revised Working Time Directive in conciliation procedure between the EU institutions, there has been a call from all sides for a period of reflection. The ETUC Executive Committee agrees that there should be a period of reflection before any future revision of the directive. However, concerning the current directive, the ETUC Executive Committee strongly calls for action to be taken to ensure that the Directive is being properly and fully implemented.”

Specifically, the ETUC calls on the European Commission to initiate infringement proceedings against Member States who are *significantly* failing to implement the working time directive.

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- ¹ European Foundation Working Time Developments 2008
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0903039s/tn0903039s.htm>
 - European Court of Justice (ECJ) Press release on Sickness while on Paid Annual Leave
<http://curia.europa.eu/en/actu/communiqués/cp09/aff/cp090004en.pdf>
- Is this one footnote or 2 – if 1 loose bullets – if 2 where does the nr 1 go?

Following this, the ETUC stated, in its submission to the Swedish Presidency, that;
“the ball is now in the court of the Commission again. In ETUC’s view it should take action – after 9 years of postponing taking proper responsibility – to implement and enforce the current Directive, as interpreted by the ECJ. The Court has, in a series of consistent case-law since 2000, confirmed time and again that on-call work in the workplace must be considered as ‘working time’: this must be enforced by all available means. In ETUC’s view, there is no good reason for rushing to a new proposal for revision and it would be wise to leave this issue to the new Commission”.

The European Commission has not only shown inaction on the implementation of the current Working Time Directive, it has at least tacitly signaled to European employers’ organizations that it would neither act upon the various rulings of the European Court of Justice nor take account of the compromise reached in the European Parliament. This was the case at the meeting of the Intersectoral Social Dialogue Committee in October, where the Commission announced a ‘new approach’ to working time. Based on a leaked text version, this new approach was to cover:

- Longer average working hours;
- Treatment of on-call time;
- Flexibility of the averaging of weekly working hours;
- Flexibility of the timing of minimum daily and weekly rests.

The Commission refrained from publishing the announced Communication on working time as its mandate expired early in November.

The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty – its implications for the public sector

With the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU’s legal framework for public services has taken a decisive step forward and there are now clear obligations for the European Union to act in the area of public services. The Lisbon Treaty has a new Protocol on public services which defines key values for Services of General Interest (SGI) such as quality, user rights, safety and affordability, equal treatment and universal access. SGI are understood to fulfill two main objectives: implement fundamental social and economic rights of people; and achieve economic, social and territorial cohesion. This shift is explained in the EPSU paper adopted by the November 2009 Executive Committee on ‘*Services of General Interest after the Lisbon Treaty*’. This Executive Committee paper sets out a number of demands on the EU:

- SGI protocol to the Lisbon Treaty as ‘benchmark’ or reference point by which to judge EU and national developments regarding public services;
- ‘general interest’ statute as way of strengthening the regulatory framework applicable to public services providers;
- Universal access to public services, as a key demand (and reinforced by wording from the SGI Protocol);
- A European Parliament inter-service group on public services, as a forum to build cross-party political support for quality public services.²

EPSU has set up a network to coordinate work on public services.

The implementation of the Services Directive

EPSU contributed to the ETUC workshop organised in October 2009 on the implementation of the Services Directive. Member States were required to transpose the directive by the end of 2009, but not all have yet done so. Particular problems are reported regarding the scope

² . The EP intergroup was established early in 2010

of transposition (what is covered and what not) and the setting up of the points of single contact. The Commission will organise the first 'mutual evaluation' process by the end of 2010, in which Member States are required to review specific provisions (such as authorisation schemes, legal form requirements, tariffs, ownership restrictions, etc.) and submit a report on the results of this review setting out which requirements were abolished, amended or maintained. During this process, the results of the review of legislation will be discussed with and between Member States. As foreseen in the Directive, interested parties will be consulted. The results of the consultation will feed into the summary report to be submitted by the Commission to the EP and the Council at the end of the process (by end 2010).

See http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/docs/2009/planned_en.pdf

The application of social criteria in public contracts – pressing for the Commission guide on social procurement

Member States have a long history with integrating social criteria into procurement dating back to the early 20th century, most notably with 'social clauses' demanding that contractors pay fair wages. Unfortunately, the EU public procurement directives adopted in 2004 did not build on this history, and this resulted in a less than clear situation where public authorities *can* integrate social considerations, but there is no active encouragement for them to do so. On the other hand, since 2004 the EU has supported green procurement through the use of targets and other measures. The EU Treaty now calls for a 'social market economy'. This means that 'social' procurement can catch up. 'Best value' does not mean cheapest, and quality of work goes hand in hand with quality of goods and services.

EPSU has been active with a number of other federations and NGOs in pressing the EU to 'be more active on social procurement. During the year we contributed to various draft versions of a long-awaited EC Guide to Socially Responsible Public Procurement (SRPP) and also put this item on the agenda of the local and regional government social dialogue.

'Spring alliance' for sustainable development

EPSU contributed to the Spring Alliance – a coalition bringing together the ETUC, the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and the Social Platform with the aim of making social and sustainable development the ultimate goal of the new Social Agenda and the 'EU2020' strategy under discussion. The campaign drew up a joint manifesto that stresses the links between social and environmental policies and the need for alternative economic models. The Commission published a Communication developing new ideas about the 'growth' model of economic development see <http://www.beyond-gdp.eu/index.html> and http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/prosperity_without_growth_report.pdf

The OECD also called for a new generation of statistics to measure social progress and well-being.

"The gap between macroeconomic evidence and people's perception does not result from low quality of official statistics, but from their inappropriate use. This can lead to biased analysis and wrong policy targets. We need to go beyond the current measurement system, based on metrics of production, to a system that genuinely focuses on societal well-being and progress"

see http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_37443_43951876_1_1_1_1,00.html

The draft manifesto and campaign materials can be found on a dedicated website www.springalliance.eu.

Section 2: 8th EPSU Congress, 8 – 11 June, Brussels

The 8th EPSU Congress opened one day after the elections to the European Parliament. These were won by the European Peoples' Party with major losses for the European Socialist Party and other progressive forces.

Importantly also, the EPSU Congress took place against the background of financial and economic turmoil, holding the European and global economy in its grip, with threats of job cuts throughout the economy. Consequently, discussion at Congress very much focused on this issue highlighting in particular the situation in Latvia, Iceland and Ireland.

The EPSU Congress stressed the central role of the public sector to overcome the crisis through investment in public services and public infrastructure. This is to stabilise the economy, reduce inequalities, maintain demand and employment, and contribute to future environmentally sustainable economic growth.

Congress highlighted EPSU's work on public services as an overarching issue and its sectoral work, with specific resolutions on each sector submitted for discussion and adoption.

Changes to the EPSU Constitution were adopted and have laid the foundations for the merger between EPSU and PSI Europe, with EPSU now covering the entire European Continent and being the recognized European regional organization of PSI.

Major Congress highlights were the sessions held on gender equality and trade union rights. Further debates focused on recruitment and on migration. A link to all adopted Congress resolutions can be found at the back of this document.

The list of official speakers comprised:

- Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, President of the European Socialist Party;
- Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Energy;
- Freddy Thielemans, Mayor of Brussels;
- John Monks, ETUC General Secretary;
- Peter Waldorff, PSI General Secretary;
- John Evans, General Secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD;
- Godfrey Perera, HOSPEEM General Secretary.

Congress reelected Anne-Marie Perret as President and Carola Fischbach-Pyttel as General Secretary.

The list of elected members of the Executive Committee can be found at <http://www.epsu.org/a/5967>.

Yves Labasque, from CFDT Interco, France and Josiane Dekoker, CGSP-Admi, Belgium, were elected as member auditors.

Section 3: Executive Committee

Immediately, after the close of Congress, the newly established Executive Committee convened to elect the following four Vice Presidents:

- Tuire Santamaki-Vuori, JHL, Finland
- Rosa Pavanelli, FP-CGIL, Italy
- Dave Prentis, UNISON, UK
- Mikhael Kuzmenko, HWURF, Russia.

The November Executive agreed to Dave Prentis as EPSU First Vice President. Other main items were the presentation and general endorsement of the EPSU Work Programme 2010 – 2014, the presentation of the SKTF – EPSU Study on representativeness of women in EPSU affiliated unions and the adoption of Criteria applied to Constituency project Work.

The Executive Committee met on 26-27 March, 21 April, 8 June, 11 June and 9-10 November (see <http://www.epsu.org/r/26>).

Finances, Membership & Personnel

The Executive Committee

- Adopted the finance report 2008,
- noted the information contained in the Report of the Member Auditors and Balance sheet for the year 2008,
- Approved the situation at end-June 2009 and projection to end-December 2009
- Approved the provisional budget for the year 2010.
- Agreed to establish a Finance Working Group composed of composed of the President and one representative per constituency (which can be a vice-president or another member of the Executive Committee) as well as the EPSU General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary.

Congress adopted

- The finance report 2004-2008
- A resolution on affiliation fees resulting from the merger <http://www.epsu.org/r/493>

Membership

The following changes took place in the Secretariat:

Union's name	Countries	Number of members
NEW AFFILIATIONS		
Gewerkschaft vida	Austria	6.000
Trade Union of Energy Sector of Republic of Srpska	Bosnia-Herzegovina	3.800
Trade Union of Workers in Cultural Facilities	Czech Republic	1.728
Federation of Employees of Local and Central Public Administration	Romania	3.500
Trade Union Federation of Public Services	Romania	2.500
Srbijagas Trade Union	Serbia	950
Trade union of Nurses and Medical Technicians of Serbia	Serbia	35.000
The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists	United Kingdom	8.558
EXPULSION		
Fédération des Finances et Affaires Economiques - CFDT	France	500

Veronica Nilsson started working in the secretariat on a 1 year contract basis to cover the workload in the health and social services area. Véronique Vandenabeele was seconded to the secretariat by Belgian affiliate CGSP Admi for a 6 month period to assist in the preparation of Congress.

Section 4: Gender Equality

The EPSU Gender Equality Committee met on 5 May and was invited to express its views throughout the year on the following:

- EPSU/SKTF survey on women's representation in EPSU and its affiliates, see below
- EPSU's response to Commission's consultation on future roadmap on gender equality <http://www.epsu.org/a/5768>
- Equal pay: preparations of EPSU congress resolution and, in cooperation with the HSS committee, finalisation of the report *Pay and the gender wage gap in health and social care*, Jane Pillinger, please see <http://www.epsu.org/a/6272>
- Revision of parental leave agreement: The negotiations on the revision of the 1995 parental leave agreement were finalised on 23 March. The revised text represents a modest advance. It increases the length of parental leave for children up to 8 years from 3 to 4 months, one month of which is non-transferable between parents to encourage fathers to take up parental leave, gives more flexibility on the way parental leave can be taken and strengthens the rights on return to work. It covers all workers including part-time, temporary and agency workers. On the other key priorities of the ETUC (and EPSU) i.e. payment of parental leave, common standards on paid paternity leave, recognition of non-traditional parenthood, the text fails to provide binding provisions due to the employers' opposition and Commission's unclear legal alternatives. As a result, it will be important to maximize the use of the soft references in the agreement to the role of income in increasing take up of parental leave and to "diversity of family structures" during its implementation at national level. The agreement should also be used as a means to negotiate agreements that go beyond the minimum requirements. As a first revision of a European social partners' agreement, some lessons can be drawn.. The negotiations were preceded by (too) long pre-negotiations talks (2 years); the Commission's cautious approach despite strong research evidence backing up the need to "paid" parental leave to ensure it is actually used by both parents was not helpful. The agreement will be transposed into a directive early 2010. The committee was represented on the ETUC delegation by Blair Horan, CPSU, Ireland. Text of the agreement and ETUC explanatory note can be found @ <http://www.epsu.org/a/6161>
- Revision of the maternity directive of 1992 (codecision with parliament, health and safety legal base of the EC treaty): The proposal increases the length of leave from 14 to 18 weeks (with longer time for exceptional circumstances) on full pay with a possibility, however, to introduce/maintain a ceiling that must not be below sickness pay. The ETUC and EPSU welcomed the proposal but called for stronger health and safety measures, especially in the area of reproductive health and reproductive hazards, which is relevant for both women and men. Risk assessment plays a central role in the Directive, but is limited to once a woman reports to be pregnant, which can be too late. Unlike other health and safety directives, the Directive does not provide for workers' representative bodies to be consulted on preventive measures. The ETUC also calls for stronger provisions on breastfeeding. As it proved impossible to include a right to paid paternity leave in the negotiations of the revised parental leave agreement, the ETUC presses for it to be considered in the context of the maternity directive (possibly 2-4 weeks which is the average where it exists in the EU). In view of the opposition of some member states and business, lobbying of the European Parliament will be critical to the adoption of the proposed directive. More information @ <http://www.epsu.org/a/6279>

EPSU/SKTF report on women's representation in EPSU and its affiliates

The report was prepared by Ulrika Oberg seconded by SKTF to EPSU, to whom we are very grateful. It was presented and approved at the Executive Committee meeting of November. On the basis of 47 responses from EPSU affiliates, representing 9.8 Million members, it was found that 68.5 % of EPSU's members are women (in the post-merger affiliates it is almost

80%), compared to 40% in the ETUC. Overall, female membership is increasing slightly in all EPSU constituencies although longitudinal gendered data are not always available. Amongst affiliates, a majority of the trade union leaders are men, except in the Nordic constituency where a majority are women, and in the post-merger affiliates where the leadership is fairly distributed between men and women. Numbers of women have also increased in affiliates' Congresses and highest decision-making bodies after congress, often due to binding Gender parity and/or proportionality provisions. However, in the EPSU Executive Committee and sectoral committees, women's representation remains below our constitutional requirements for gender parity and proportionate representation respectively. In sectoral committees, women's membership does not reflect the affiliates' reported female membership. While there are some good practices available the general picture can be much improved which will require pro-active measures both at national and European levels. The Executive Committee mandated the EPSU secretariat to draft an action plan to help improve the situation and agreed to annual reports.

Text of the report is available in EN, FR and SP <http://www.epsu.org/a/6268>

To note, the ETUC women's committee of 15-16 December 2009, elected its new presidency including UNISON Gloria Mills.

Section 5: Utilities

Standing Committee on Public Utilities

The political agenda of the utilities unions was dominated by:

- *Global warming and its ensuing climate change.* This was a recurring theme throughout the year with discussions on the implementation of the European Emission Trading Scheme, preparations for the Climate Change summit in Copenhagen mainly led by the ETUC and ITUC on the trade union side, and the European Union energy road maps 2050. Together with the employers in the electricity and gas sectors EPSU is seeking a focus on skills, training and employment in these long term Commission scenario's to reduce green house gasses. A joint project with Eurelectric on Just Employment Transition Principles started as part of the social dialogue, this will be a major issue in 2010. Waste unions underlined the growth potential of the sector: jobs that keep the planet green and clean.
- *The impact of the economic and financial crisis.* The utilities sector that saw the deepest impact was on the *waste* sector with declining volumes, delayed and cancelled investment, closures and job losses. There were several conflicts with workers and their unions fighting wage freezes and job cuts. EPSU successfully supported these unions. In the water and electricity and gas sectors, investments also came under pressure. EPSU has been promoting investment in public infrastructure such as water and waste water facilities, renewables, electricity grids and power plants and gas pipelines as part of European recovery plans.
- *EPSU Congress 2009.* An action plan has been prepared based on the Committee's resolution approved by Congress. One of the main items will be the EPSU water campaign to ensure a fundamental human right to water and put this issue on the European political agenda through a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). EPSU prepared a contribution to the Commission's Green paper on the ECI.

Other issues:

- The Standing Committee, in the Social Dialogue Committees (electricity and gas) and individual meetings discussed the impact of smart meters on employment. A contribution was made to the European Regulators for Gas and Electricity ongoing discussions requesting for them to take the employment, training and other issues into account. This will be followed up and linked to smart grids in 2010.
- EPSU supported amendments during the consultation on nuclear safety, health and safety and workers. Although these were endorsed by a large majority of the European Parliament (EP), the Council ignored these and many other EP positions.
- Efforts were made to influence the impact assessment on the Bio-Waste Directive, by seeking a reference to health and safety and the importance of training.
- Waste unions continue to seek respect for pay and conditions; and health and safety in public contracts.
- EPSU supported the European Water Networks' water manifesto, intervened with the European Parliament and the European Commission to influence their positions for the World Water Forum in Istanbul; EPSU promoted the concept of public-public partnerships in development aid by the Commission.
- The trade unions signed a joint statement with Eurelectric on Corporate Social Responsibility. The European *electricity* employers endorsed the special reporting guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative making it the first continental statement of support. The statement will be followed up with the EPSU project on European Works Councils (EWCs) in energy companies and a report on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) prepared by Dutch research institute SOMO will be published in 2010.
- The joint project with Eurogas and EMCEF on Demographic Change and Competencies for the gas sector was concluded with a successful first European social partner conference. A study, prepared by the Working Life Research Institute's David

Tarren and a toolkit, prepared by Jane Pillinger were finalized for employers and unions to use.

- Led by EPSU, the Social Dialogue Committees for gas and for electricity, and the 2nd Social Forum of the South East European Energy Community, issued critical positions on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the incompleteness of the National Social Action Programmes prepared by governments. Critical questions on this were also raised in the European Parliament.

President and Vice-Presidents: the Committee elected Sven Bergelin, Verdi, Germany as President and Jan Ruden, SEKO, Sweden and Reszo Gal, VDSzSz (new name: EVDSZ following a merger), Hungary as Vice-Presidents for the Congress period.

The Standing Committee met on 14 May and 29 September.

EPSU EWC Coordinators Network

Following the ETUC campaign for a revised EWC Directive to which EPSU and EPSU coordinated EWCs contributed, the amended EWC Directive was published in May 2009 and will be operational in May 2011. EPSU has been working with ETUC and other European Trade Union Federations to issue joint guidelines for negotiators, ensuring that new EWCs take account of the strengthened rights provided by the new Directive. EPSU continues its work to ensure that more multinational companies are covered by EWCs. Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU, University of Greenwich) updated several sector studies and surveyed the companies active in these sectors.

The EWC Coordinators Network and the Standing Committee also dealt with the procedures and mandates on Transnational Agreements which are negotiated between multinational companies and EPSU as well as affiliated unions to arrive at *European* wide agreements covering the whole workforce. Based on three years of discussion, the Executive Committee approved these procedures in November 2009. The basic point is that unions involved will approve whether we negotiate; what we negotiate on and the final result.

Section 6: Local and Regional Government

Key issues for the Standing Committee in 2009 were:

- *New Work programme*: the Committee prepared a new work programme, based on the Local and Regional Government (LRG) sectoral Resolution and other documents adopted by the Congress. The work programme also reflects evaluation of the work carried out by the Committee and stresses the need to support new members of the Committee, for example by providing overviews of key committee documents and making the LRG section on the EPSU website as accessible as possible. At national level there is a need to share information and to involve more colleagues in the work of the Committee.

The work programme contains some 'new' issues, for example sustainable development (e.g., local climate plans', reducing energy consumption in public buildings, developing 'green' jobs); care work (in cooperation with the Standing Committee on Health and Social Services); and life-long learning and skills development. It confirms social dialogue with CEMR as a core activity of the Standing Committee, and also emphasises the importance of continuing to work on public procurement and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

- *'Pay checklist'*. The Committee drew up a checklist with the Standing Committee on National and European Administration to provide a framework for discussions. The first theme will focus on equal pay and closing the gender pay gap. The aim here is to make tangible progress on implementing the two Congress resolutions on this subject.
- *Quality Public Finance (QPF)*. A review of the EU's Quality Public Finance Initiative (QPF) was carried out with the Standing Committee on National and European Administration. The QPF is critical of high public spending and large public sectors. The workshop concluded that it is important to counter this and to challenge the move in Europe towards more regressive – i.e., unfair - tax systems. In follow-up to the workshop EPSU is revising the 2000 EPSU 'tax charter', which calls for extending the tax base (e.g. environmental tax, Tobin tax), ensuring tax systems are fair and progressive, and combating tax havens.
- *Migrant workers*. See page 18

Chairs and Vice Chairs: the Committee elected Anders Hammarbäck, SKTF Sweden as Chair and Jose Manuel Marques, STAL, Portugal and Heather Wakefield, UNISON, UK as Vice-Chairs for the Congress period.

The Standing Committee met on 28 May and 24 September.

Social dialogue with CEMR:

- Discussions with CEMR on the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the local and regional government sector led to the adoption of a statement in March. This linked in to the work in 2008 on restructuring ("*supporting the reform process in local and regional government: joint evaluation of the experience in different forms of service provision*") in which we identified the need for long-term planning at local level and the need for social partnership. In the joint statement attention is drawn to the importance of maintaining public spending and the role of the local and regional government sector in tackling the crisis.
- An "*Overview of social dialogue in local and regional government*" was published as part the 2008 project to support social dialogue at national level. The overview was prepared by Lionel Fulton at LRD UK and gives a snapshot of how local and regional government operates in the different countries, including in relation to social dialogue.
- Continuation of the work on multi-sectoral initiative on third-party-violence. This initiative follows on from the ETUC/BusinessEurope/UEAPME/CEEP Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at Work and involves social partners in the private security, commerce, hospital and local and regional government sectors. Trade unions and employers' organisations identified best practices in dealing with

third-party violence and these were discussed at a workshop and Conference. The different sectors then agreed a joint summary of the findings of both reports and a 'joint Commitment' to tackle the problems. The Commitment outlines the main actions that need to be taken in such initiatives. The initiative will continue in 2010

- Workshop on social procurement (October 2009). EPSU and CEMR consider that public authorities should have full freedom to take into account social criteria in public procurement into account in order to ensure 'best value' for money. The EU procurement directives give possibilities to public authorities to this but there are uncertainties regarding the legal framework as well as the practical steps that can be taken. The workshop had a first discussion on the general framework for social procurement and we will return to this issue in 2010 when the Commission is expected to public a Guide to Socially Responsible Public Procurement.
- A second workshop on the CLIP project (European Cities for the Local Integration of Migrants) supported by Eurofound which looked at the final CLIP recommendations on 'equality and diversity in jobs' and concluded that we should continue to disseminate / exchange experiences, including on the practical application of positive action / equal treatment. Work on this issue will continue, building on the NEA/LRG survey and work on migrants.

EPSU firefighters' network

EPSU organised a meeting of the network in September. The network focused on health and safety (standardisation) and civil protection. The meeting also discussed the outcome of a project organised by Mediterranean members which focused on health and safety issues confronting firefighters.

Section 7: National and European Administrations

Formalisation of social dialogue continued to be the main priority, with the implementation of the 2008-2009 test phase between the EPSU-led trade union delegation, TUNED, and EUPAN on “work forms and content” of a formal social dialogue. This consisted in:

- Completing the EU-funded Trust project on the role of social dialogue in anticipating changes in national administrations, with an emphasis on equality and diversity, training and workers’ rights to information and consultation. The project report commissioned to the Working Lives Research Institute provided detailed information on 15 EU and candidate countries (available <http://www.epsu.org/a/5401>). Its findings were presented at the project conference on 29-30 April in Prague Czech, Spanish and Swedish good example of how social partners had been involved in shaping changes rather than merely reacting to reforms. The conference was attended by 80 EUPAN and TUNED delegates with the participation of the Commission (DG EMPL) and public administration French Director General and Czech Minister and Director General. This led to the adoption of a set of conclusions by TUNED and EUPAN in June. The text states that a constructive, structured and well resourced social dialogue and early and regular involvement of employees and trade unions facilitates the anticipation of change and implementation of reforms and represents a key element to improve trust between employers and employees, please see <http://www.epsu.org/a/5362>
- Following on the joint position on stress at work (dec.2008, <http://www.epsu.org/a/4462>), compilation of good practices and policies on involvement of trade unions in managing and preventing stress at work in 10 EU countries. The report was finalised at a social dialogue working group on 16 September. To note, the joint position was translated in 10 languages and together with the compilation report has contributed to launch social partners’ related discussions in France and Estonia.
- Starting an exchange of views under the Swedish EU presidency on sustaining an efficient administration on 16 November, please see multimedia report <http://www.epsu.org/a/5963> .
- Evaluation of the test Phase: On behalf of EUPAN, the Swedish presidency commissioned Ramböll to evaluate the second year of the Test Phase and set up a taskforce with 15 EUPAN members with a view to make a recommendation on the future of social dialogue i.e to formalise or not. The taskforce heard the views of the commission, CEEP and TUNED (please see TUNED contribution <http://www.epsu.org/a/5962>). The Ramböll report concluded that the Test phase had been very successful both in terms of process and content. However EUPAN did not reach unanimity on formalisation. Instead, in a resolution on social dialogue adopted by the EU-27 DGs on 11 December, it invites TUNED to continue a structured informal social dialogue and notes the possibility for those national administrations who wish so to opt in formalisation. TUNED expressed its determination to focus on the opening towards formalisation in the course of 2010. Its involvement in an informal social dialogue will be assessed in light of good progress achieved on formalisation, as a logical step after a successful test phase (all abovementioned documents can be found <http://www.epsu.org/a/6025>).

Other topics dealt with at the 29th and 30th Committee meetings:

- Adoption of the NEA/LRG checklist on fairer pay and pay systems in cooperation with, please see above, LRG section
- Workshops on the Commission’s quality public finance agenda May 2009, also in cooperation with LRG, see above. As part of the follow-up, it was agreed to update the EPSU tax charter of 2000.
- Adoption of a statement “*Cuts in public sector pay and jobs is not the solution to the crisis*”.

- Adoption of work programme 2009-2014 including trade union rights and social dialogue; quality administrations/quality jobs; and improving internal Committee structure (including women and youth representativity). New policy areas are immigration policy; taxation; public employment services. Work on specific groups of workers such as prison staff will continue.
- discussion on E.government in light of the implementation of the services in the internal market directive, with the participation of Ver.di representative Annette Mühlberg

Chairs and Vice Chairs: the Committee elected Charles Cochrane, PCS, UK as chair and Thora Petersen, HK/Stat- OAO, DK, Jean-Paul Devos, CSC-services publics, Belgium and Jacek Ciacma, FSC-CCOO, Spain, as vice-chairs.

NEA/LRG/ETUI workshop on migration/migrant workers, 3-4.11.2009, Athens

The workshop was attended by 40 delegates from 17 countries with plenary presentations from the ETUC, OECD and Labour Research Department (LRD). A detailed report is available <http://www.epsu.org/a/5467>. Developments at EU level on migration policy, ETUC response and EPSU Congress resolution on migration (June 2009), moved by the Mediterranean constituency, prompted this initiative. The research report carried out by LRD on trade union actions for migrant workers and key issues faced by public sector staff dealing with migrants will be available early 2010. The workshop made a number of recommendations to EPSU as follows (some of which are already part of the Congress resolution):

- combating the hierarchy of workers' rights in the EU and restrictions in access to public services on the basis of identification of migration status (e.g. health services),
- promoting the ratification by EU member states of the UN convention on migrants and their families,
- highlighting the public sector dimension and the specific difficulties faced by public sector staff dealing with migrants in the ETUC response to EU policy developments
- developing a code of conduct on migration issues
- facilitating exchange of information and trade union actions to support and organise migrant workers amongst affiliates.

Workshop follow-up and above recommendations will be discussed at the 2010 spring meetings of the NEA and LRG committee meetings.

Section 8: Health and Social Services

Key issues for the Standing Committee in 2009 were:

- The negotiations between EPSU and HOSPEEM on the Framework Agreement on Prevention from Sharp Injuries in the Hospital and Healthcare Sector and the proposal for a Council Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare were the two key issues during the year.
In less than six months, EPSU and HOSPEEM concluded the negotiations on a Framework Agreement on Prevention from Sharp Injuries in the Hospital and Healthcare Sector. The agreement aims to achieve the safest possible working environment by preventing injuries caused by medical sharps. The number of sharp injuries are estimated to be more than 1.200.000 every year only in Europe. The agreement was signed on 17 July 2009 by EPSU and HOSPEEM. On 26 October 2009, the European Commission made a proposal for a Council Directive implementing the agreement (<http://www.epsu.org/a/5951>).
- Throughout 2009, EPSU continued the campaign on the proposal for a Council Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. In April 2009, the EPSU Executive Committee published a declaration on the directive in view of the vote in the European Parliament (<http://www.epsu.org/a/4912>). This was followed by a letter to EU Health Ministers in May 2009 laying out the EPSU position that the directive should be based on article 152 of the treaty on public health, and not the internal market, and that it should not undermine member states' possibilities to plan their national health systems (<http://www.epsu.org/a/5863>). After the failure of the Swedish presidency to reach a political agreement on the directive, EPSU and HOSPEEM published a joint statement urging the Spanish Presidency to re-assess the draft directive in light of the new public service provisions of the Lisbon Treaty. Governments were also urged not to introduce any measures that could threaten the principles of universality, accessibility, affordability and quality in the provision of healthcare (<http://www.epsu.org/a/6009>).

Other issues were:

- EPSU response to the European Commission consultation on the *Green Paper on the European Health Workforce* (<http://www.epsu.org/a/4840>);
- EPSU response to the European Commission consultation on the *Green Paper on Health Inequalities* (<http://www.epsu.org/a/4840>).
- The *work programme for 2009-2014* based on the congress resolutions covering cross-border healthcare, quality of healthcare and social services, equal rights, strengthening of the social dialogue, cross-border recruitment of workers, strengthening EPSU involvement in social services, improving working conditions, promoting trade union rights and monitoring multinational enterprises.

President and Vice-Presidents: the Committee elected Liza di Paolo Sandberg, Kommunal, Sweden as President and Jiri Schlanger, OSZCP CR, Czech Republic and Gail Adams UNISON, UK and Margret Steffen, ver.di, Germany as Vice-Presidents for the Congress period

The Standing Committee met on 30 March and 4 November.

Social Services

A workshop on Social Services was organised on 5 November. It took stock of trade union activities in the field of social services and discussed EU policies on social services of general interest. One of the main issues was the increasing establishment of private providers in healthcare, in particular in elderly care, and how this affected working conditions. The workshop also addressed the issue of future EPSU work on social services and there was agreement to focus on elderly care.

Social dialogue in the hospital sector

In addition to the sharps negotiations, EPSU and HOSPEEM organised two technical seminars on “new skills needs” and on “retention”. Affiliates were encouraged to provide case studies of good practices that could feed into two separate social dialogue tools. At the Plenary Meeting of the Social Dialogue Committee on 8 December 2009, EPSU and HOSPEEM agreed to integrate some of the issues on new skills needs into the work on a framework of actions on retention.

Section 9: Collective bargaining

Equal pay was one of the key collective bargaining issues during the year. It was the focus of two resolutions at Congress and was the focus of collective bargaining work in the Health and Social Services (HSS), Local and Regional Government (LRG) and National and European Administration (NEA) Standing Committees.

The LRG and NEA Committees agreed to develop a Pay Checklist as a framework for discussions on pay systems. The idea of the checklist is to identify the main elements that go to make up a fair pay structure and pay increases. In order to make progress on this broad range of issues it was agreed to work initially on equal pay and find out the extent to which affiliates had addressed the various elements of the equal pay resolutions. The HSS committee also agreed to work on equal pay as a follow-up to an earlier report on pay inequality in the care sector.

The Standing Committee on Public Utilities received updates on collective bargaining in the sector with further efforts to ensure a comprehensive coverage in the survey of pay increases provided to each committee meeting.

The group on Collective Bargaining in Central and Western Europe met three times during the year in January, March and October. This group brings together energy affiliates from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands to discuss a range of collective bargaining issues of common interest. In March the unions agreed to continue meeting twice a year and to contribute to the costs of the meeting.

One of the main issues debated during the year was the scope for comparing pay between countries. One approach was an analysis of pay, profits and dividend information from company annual reports that revealed a significant trend among several of the major energy companies where the total pay bill was falling in relation to profits and dividends.

The other approach was to try to look at salary levels for different occupations. This proved complex and it was agreed to work with the Wage Indicator project at the University of Amsterdam to see if its international network of salary comparison websites could be used to do provide information on the energy sector in particular. Unfortunately, the Wage Indicator's application for European funding was rejected but it was planned to submit a revised bid in early 2010.

A report on collective bargaining in the energy sector in South East Europe was presented to the annual roundtable that meets in the region in the autumn. A small group of trade unionists agreed to form a working group on collective bargaining to look at a range of basic bargaining issues and it is hoped that they will be able to put together some information in time for the roundtable meeting in 2010.

The annual collective bargaining conference in December attracted over 140 participants and it was particular good to see that virtually all the financial support from the European Commission was taken up by affiliates from Central and Eastern Europe, including the three candidate countries. Several new affiliates from the merger with PSI Europe also attended for the first time.

The conference included sessions on the crisis, decent work and implementation of the Congress resolution on collective bargaining. There were also working groups on women and equality, precarious employment and lifelong learning. Initial findings from background research for the conference on working time and lifelong learning showed that few affiliates had negotiated any major changes in their policies. The final report on these issues would be due in early 2010 and would be discussed further at three regional collective bargaining conferences that would go ahead following a successful application for European Commission funding.

The bi-monthly email newsletter, *epsucob@NEWS*, continued to keep affiliates up-to-date with the latest developments in collective bargaining and changes to the website meant that articles from the newsletter were now stored on the basis of each of EPSU's main sectors and also of gender equality. Work also began on the website to improve the range of information available on a country and sectoral basis, using material published in a range of studies commissioned by EPSU or carried out for the European Commission.

Links

Collective Bargaining Annual Conference 2009 <http://www.epsu.org/a/5512>

Collective Bargaining in the Energy Sector in Central and Western Europe
<http://www.epsu.org/r/427>

Collective Bargaining Country Profiles <http://www.epsu.org/r/463>

epsucob@NEWS <http://www.epsu.org/r/121>

sectoral news

HSS <http://www.epsu.org/cob/97>

N EA <http://www.epsu.org/cob/91>

LRG <http://www.epsu.org/cob/101>

PUT <http://www.epsu.org/cob/94>

Gender equality <http://www.epsu.org/cob/329>

Section 10: Regions

Central Europe

The 12th annual Central European (CE) Constituency Meeting, held in Skopje, Macedonia, in January 2009, discussed the development in all countries of the CE constituency. In order to improve some weak points of trade union work, affiliates suggested and agreed several projects (7 activities) for 2009, sponsored by PSI which focused on both main groups and main sectors of public services: young workers, women, energy, municipal services, state administration and health and social services.

The report on developments and initiatives in the CE constituency in 2009 presented at the EPSU Executive Meeting in November 2009 described the political, economic and social situation in Central Europe and the Western Balkans from the trade union point of view, introduced the project work and focused on its outcomes.

The main recommendations were:

- Connect the next CE constituency meeting with a seminar on EU enlargement;
- Inform CEMR about specific problems in Western Balkan countries and invite its representative to attend the next meeting of municipal trade unions;
- Send a letter to the national governments of the countries in the CE constituency informing them about problems regarding social dialogue and trade union rights, and about negative impacts of privatisation in the public sector, and ask them to respect trade union and workers rights and to stop privatisation;
- Ask the Regional Cooperation Council to devote special attention to the economic and social development in the region under the current situation of economic crisis, to the EU integration process that needs to be continued, and ask for closer cooperation with trade union organisations;
- Ask the EU and its relevant institutions to help the Western Balkan countries in overcoming the consequences of the economic crisis providing financial assistance for the creation of social investment funds or labour funds which would be used to help workers in difficult conditions;
- Focus of EPSU work in 2010 is to support affiliates most affected by the crisis

The organisers of all activities and the participating unions have been always asked to respect PSI/EPSU policy on gender balance. Nevertheless, in some individual cases this was not possible due to the character of trade unions or purpose of the activities (e.g. "Energy Round Table" for energy trade unions with male predominance or seminar on "Women and Gender Equality in Civil Service" with female predominance). But in general the policy on gender balance has been reached: There were 7 projects attended in total by 95 male participants and 93 female participants.

All projects in 2009 respected the limits of the PSI budget for activities in the European region. For 2010 there is a need to allocate money for some follow up meetings (e.g. Energy Round Table for South Eastern Europe, Projects for municipal and state workers of countries from the former Yugoslavia, etc.).

ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN THE CE EUROPEAN REGION IN 2009

1. Motivation of Young Workers to Active Membership – 2 seminars for the affiliates in the Czech Republic and Slovakia on 24-26 April and 18 October organised as a follow-up to the PSI/IMPACT Youth Project 2007-2008.
2. 9th PSI/EPSU/FES Energy Round Table for South East European Energy Community Countries - 17-18 September for affiliates from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia

3. Quality Municipal Services Campaign - 08-09 October for the municipal affiliates in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia
4. Women and Gender Equality in Civil Service - 21-22 May for the State sector affiliates in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia Macedonia and Montenegro
5. Social Dialogue in Public Administration and Rights of State Workers - Serbian TU of Nurses and Medical Technicians and other Serbian affiliates in the Health sector

List of related documents

- 12th Central European Constituency Meeting available on the PSI website “Meetings and Networks”
- Report on Developments and Initiatives in Central European Constituency in 2009 available from the EPSU Secretariat and the Regional Office in Prague
- Reports of individual projects available from the PSI Secretariat and the Regional Office in Prague
- Progress Reports (Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia) on EU accession:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/progress_reports/index_en.htm

North-East Europe

The Constituency affiliates carried out different activities in order to mitigate negative effects of the crisis. Thus, public sector unions of Armenia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine made relevant statements and appeals in which they expressed their stand relating to inadmissibility to shift the burden of crisis to workers. All decision-making bodies of the EPSU affiliates discussed trade union activities in current conditions. In Armenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Ukraine public sector unions together with national trade union confederations contributed to the monitoring of social and economic situation.

Almost everywhere public sector unions continued regular consultations with sectoral ministries in order to initiate additional anti-crisis measures and participate in their implementation. Unions participated in the meetings of anti-crisis committees and groups in public sector. Other forms of social partnership are used, including memorandums.

In Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine, mass protest actions were organized against large scale violations of workers' labour and social and economic rights.

The Health Workers' Union of Georgia together with other unions took part in organization of a general protest action in front of the Parliament of Georgia.

The pressure of public sector unions helped to prevent closure of some enterprises, mass dismissal of workers, and violation of their social and labour rights.

Workshops were organized to develop an understanding of the current processes in economic, social and labour policy areas, as well as to develop recommendations on trade union activity in the financial and economic crisis such as the role of unions in the protection of workers' rights, labour disputes resolution, social dialogue, and implementation of collective agreements in the Constituency countries. Most of workshop participants were women.

Solidarity support was provided to affiliates. Letters were sent to the European Delegation, IMF Representative Office, governments, and mayors relating to trade unions rights violation, interference in their activity, and privatization.

Considerable information work was carried out.

ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN THE NE EUROPEAN REGION IN 2009

1. Work/life Balance for Health and Social Care Workers: Response to Challenges through 2009
2. Role and strategy of the union in the context of reforming and developing of housing and communal services in Ukraine – 9-11 June
3. Trade Union's activity under the conditions of financial and economic crisis specificity – 15-19 June
4. National collective agreement in Lithuanian Public Services – 19-20 June
5. Labour dispute - Methods of its settlements (dispute management workshop) – 20-21 August
6. Strengthening Social Dialogue in the Healthcare Sector in 2009 – 26-27 September
7. Leadership and motivation of TU Membership – 14-18 December
8. Collective bargaining agreements at healthcare institutions and social dialogue practice – 21-22 December

List of related documents

- PSI North East Europe Constituency Meeting, Tallinn, Estonia. Meeting available on the PSI website "Meetings and Networks" available from the PSI Secretariat and the

Regional Office in Kiev

- Report on PSI Activities in North-East European Constituency for EPSU Executive Committee Brussels, 9-10 November 2009 available from the EPSU Secretariat and the Regional Office in Kiev
- Reports of individual projects available from the PSI Secretariat and the Regional Office in Kiev
- Report on PSI Activities in North-East European Constituency for PSI North East Europe Constituency Meeting, Minsk, Belarus, 26-27 April 2010 available from the Regional Office in Kiev.

South-East Europe

At the last South East Europe (SEE) constituency meeting, the affiliated organisations agreed upon a number of activities that would respond to their needs in the context of the world financial and economic crisis. Priority was given to activities covering more unions in a country or even at regional level, where appropriate. Special attention was paid to sectoral activities involving unions from all the 6 countries in the region. Gender equality was mainstreamed in all the activities organised in cooperation with PSI, EPSU or other partner organisations and a target of 30% representation of young workers was set for all the sponsored activities.

The main problems facing the public sector unions and their members were identified as follows:

- **Massive cuts in public expenditures**, justified by the global crisis. Such cuts have triggered an increase in poverty and diminished access to public services, high unemployment (8% in Romania, over 20% in Turkey and 32-38% in Albania) and pressure on workers' jobs, wages and working conditions.
- The come back of the **international financial institutions**, playing again an important role, as countries are forced to turn to the IMF and the World Bank for loans in order to survive throughout the crisis period.
- **High migration rate** from east to west, while the *remittances* sent by the migrant workers have dropped dramatically (in some countries by 30-40% less in 2009 than in 2008).
- **Social dialogue** undermined by the international crisis, the governments taking decisions unilaterally and trying to change the labour legislation and reduce workers' rights, as 'recommended' by the financial institutions. The employers are also making attempts to bridge the collective agreements, using global crisis as an excuse.
- **Trade union rights and workers' rights** under attack, particularly in Turkey where dismissals and political reprisals due to trade union membership are still frequent. In other, like Romania, employers are trying to prevent the setting up of trade unions and in some companies employment is conditional upon workers' agreeing not to create or join a union.

The unions must pressure the European Commission to adopt measures that will limit the employers' abuses and will guarantee the respect for the rights of the workers.

ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN THE S-E EUROPEAN REGION IN 2009

Trying to respond to the needs identified by the unions, PSI/EPSU organized in the course of 2009 the following activities:

1. Sectoral Seminar for Civil Servants, for the national administration unions in Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania on 28-30 May. The seminar was part of the FNV/Abvakabo project for S-E Europe;
2. Seminar on Globalisation and The Impact of the World Crisis on the Public Sector Workers in Moldova, 23-25 June. The seminar was part of the SKTF project for the Moldovan unions;
3. SEE Seminar on Health and Safety in the Health Sector, 25-26 August for the health sector unions from Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Turkey;
4. Seminar on Women and Collective Bargaining, 1-3 September for the public sector unions from Bulgaria and Romania;
5. PSI/SKTF Seminar on Quality Public Services in Moldova, 13-15 October. The seminar was part of the SKTF project for the Moldovan unions;
6. PSI/FNV Seminar on Youth on the Labour Market in Europe, 20-22 October for Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania. The seminar was part of the FNV/Abvakabo project for S-E Europe;
7. Seminar on 'Youth Migration' for the Romanian public sector unions, 21-23 December. along with similar ones from the other regions?

Evaluation and planning meetings were organized at the end of the FNV S-E Europe project and the SKTF Project – Moldova, in November-December 2009.

The Albanian unions were supported financially to run two campaigns on health and safety, in the health care sector and in the energy sector respectively.

The Turkish unions completed a project on trade union rights, which has resulted in 1,700 legal cases taken to court by the public sector unions. A new project for the next 3 years has been submitted to the Swedish partners, focusing on precarious work, with special attention to organising women and young workers.

Gender related issues have been integrated on the agendas of the activities organised. Gender parity has been observed and women's representation has been over 50%. One seminar was dedicated exclusively to women, with 23 participants. Young people's participation was encouraged and it was above 30%.

The activities organised in the region have also served the purpose of promoting the PSI and EPSU policies adopted at the last congresses.

LIST OF RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Minutes of the S-E European Constituency Meeting available on PSI and EPSU websites and at the regional office in Bucharest
- Activity reports for all the activities organized in 2009 available on PSI and EPSU websites and at the regional office in Bucharest

Russia and Central Asia

Russia

Russia has been hard hit by the global economic crisis, with most domestic businesses either laying off personnel or curtailing production amid declining demand. Russia is facing its first budget gap in more than a decade. Selling state assets is seen as helping to narrow – if not cover – this deficit. This is underpinned by overt statements by Russia's leadership, that it remains committed to the substance of a market economy in the short to medium term, as echoed in recent comments by President Medvedev pushing for a more vibrant private sector.

Unemployment: Russia's unemployment rate calculated under International Labor Organization standards fell by 100,000 people to 6.2 million, a 1.6% decline month on month. A total of 2.1 million Russian citizens were officially registered with government unemployment agencies, including 1.8 for people entitled to unemployment benefits.

Migration: Officially in Russia there are 2 million migrant workers, in reality it is probably 10 million, many of them undocumented. They cannot afford to buy a ticket to travel home. Employers who want to hire migrants to Russia must bear the burden of the expense and prepare these workers in their countries of origin.

PSI Constituency Meeting agreed that VKP must demand and fight for the CIS unemployment fund.

Violation of trade union rights: Russian Unions need unity whilst now the government seeks to instrumentalize "Sotsprof".

Health sector: Government suggested a new system of payment to health care workers; it looked good at first glance, but didn't lead to an increase of salaries. Minimum wage increased to 4,430 Rubles, but this includes now all components for extras like heavy or dangerous work, overtime work, etc. Therefore in many cases it doesn't lead to any increase.

Energy sector: The Energy Workers Union conducted the long and very difficult negotiations with the Association of Employers to strike a National Agreement (Tariff Agreement) in Electro Energy and Electro Engineering of Russia for the future. They have managed to preserve and in some cases were able to further develop achieved positions, improving the social protection of the workers.

Russian energy workers union were confronted with a big structural reform of Electro Energy sector, when after the cessation of Russian Stock Company "United Energy of Russia" – the most powerful monopoly in the electro energy sector - interregional business-structures have emerged. In these conditions, the union sought to ensure that the process of setting up of the new energy structures would be conducted in a socially responsible way with the minimum losses for the workers.

At the same time the Energy Union has been trying to find the most effective ways to organize the social dialogue with the new owners, to develop the trade union structures in interregionally integrated companies.

Utilities: Utility reform should aim for reduction of tariffs and saving energy. People have to be educated as well. Environmental consciousness has to be developed. All governors and mayors promise to decrease the tariffs, but are increasing them after having been elected.

Price for housing in Moscow: 6,000 USD per square meter is among the cheapest. Thousands have to be paid for connection to water, energy etc, and bribes of any kind for speeding up signatures.

Ten thousands cannot pay their loans or mortgages and consequently lose their homes, fridges and cars. At the same time many apartments with millions of square meters are empty. They were built and kept empty to speculate with re-sell for high prices.

Over the last years the industry lost about 1 million skilled workers due to low wages.

The current huge waste and future lack of drinking water will be very dangerous also for Russia.

Central Asia

Central Asian republics have been hit hard by the world economic crisis and most have large debts to Russia for energy. In addition, more and more of the republics in the post-Soviet

space are looking for alternate ways and more political independence from Moscow. This means that the consumption of Russian energy in these republics will be less over time and Russian officials know that this will take a toll on the state budget. Also, some Central Asian states are truly considering the Nabucco project as a better alternative to Russia's South Stream, and this presents a danger to the planning of the Russian budget for years to come and for aspirations in the near future regarding government spending. Moscow officials know this and are looking for ways to assure their budget allowance will grow in the near future. Focusing on just one project such as South Stream may yield a terrible blow to the Russian economy, as it is not guaranteed that the project will be completed.

Kyrgyzstan

Average nominal wage made up to 5,986 Soms in Kyrgyzstan in 2009, increasing by 17.7 percent compared to the same period of 2008. Number of registered jobless amounted to 64.1 thousand people reducing by 7.3 percent.

Violation of trade union rights: Kyrgyz state officials made an attempt of direct interference into internal trade union affairs which is a blatant violation of ILO Convention 87, ratified by Kyrgyzstan.

On 17 September, the General Prosecutor suspended Temirbek Djanaliev from his position as First Vice-President and Acting President of the Federation of Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan. This is not the first time that the Office of the General Prosecutor is involved in removing an elected trade union official from office.

In addition, there is clear evidence that the administration and other executive bodies have been exerting pressure aimed at influencing the planned elections, including pressure on individuals. State executive agency officers are "permanently" installed in the head office of the FPK. Similar actions were reported in the past, again before the FPK Plenum.

Energy:

Rationing of electricity supplies started in October, setting the stage for another winter of crippling power shortages. Officials said that power cuts would result in rolling blackouts nationwide between midnight and 5 a.m. every night, only schools and hospitals would be exempted from the measure, which is likely to last until spring.

There is a ban on strike action in rail transport, public transport, civil aviation, communication services, and enterprises that work around the clock, the stoppage of which would have hazardous consequences. It is the third winter in a row that Kyrgyzstan will see widespread electricity cuts, despite having substantial hydropower resources. Government critics say that corruption is behind the mishandling of the country's power resources, which are especially strained during winter months when hydropower reservoirs are frozen.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan's government owes public-sector workers some \$40 million in wage arrears. Those waiting for payment include rank-and-file social workers, teachers and doctors. According to reports from local executive bodies, on 1 April, wages arrears financed from local budgets amounted to \$40 million. Of these, the largest debt is in the Almaty region -- \$16 million, Almaty city \$8 million, North-Kazakhstan Province -- \$6.6 million, Zhambyl Province \$5.3 million, the Pavlodar Region \$3.4 million.

Thousands of Kazakh public sector workers are facing the possibility of losing their jobs. The government is considering a mass lay-off of public employees. A moratorium on hiring civil servants has been in place since April. Ongoing budgetary pressure means that the hiring freeze is unlikely to be lifted soon.

Tajikistan

The health care budget covers not more than 40% of the needs. The average salary in health care is USD 20. The minimum wage was increased from 10 to 20 USD.

A new payment system was introduced in Tajikistan. The Union strongly opposed the approach taken by the World Bank and IMF. The Tajik government accepted several

demands and proposals made by the Union such as starting the salary for doctors at USD 100. The new system was implemented on 1 July.

ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN THE RU & CA REGION IN 2009

1. Developing youth activists – Youth seminar on preparing TU trainers – 21-24 June 2009, Astana, Kazakhstan (25 participants)
2. Collective bargaining skills for young workers in health sector – Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, 28-30 July 2009 (27 participants)
3. Strategic management seminar, stage 1 – 4-7 August 2009, Dushanbe, Tajikistan (26 participants)
4. The 2nd All-Russia Youth Forum, International Conference “Perfection of technology processes of production and transmission in Electro energy and in Electro energy Engineering”; “Perfection of organization and labour condition (labour safety, health care) in the sector”; “The problems of the development of Youth creative potential” – 4-6 September 2009, Anapa, Russia (100 participants) - Participating unions::All-Russia ElectroUnion (Russia); EL&IT (Norway); Swedish Electrical Union (Sweden)
5. Seminar on HIV/aids prevention at the work place among health workers of Tajikistan including young people – 28-30 October 2009, Dushanbe, Tajikistan (25 participants)
6. Gender equality seminar - 3rd stage – 12-16 November Astana, Kazakhstan (one three-days educational seminar for trade union activists, especially women and young activists with total number of participants is 25 people)
7. Health workers migration - impact on young workers 2/2 - Conference on migration with presentation of research – 20-23 December 2009, Moscow, Russia (25 participants)

Inventory of main documents elaborated / adopted in 2009

- Statement on the crisis and collective bargaining in the public services, December 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU/IT/CZ/HU/RO) <http://www.epsu.org/a/6008>
- Towards better pay and fairer pay systems, EPSU checklist for the co-ordination of information on pay bargaining and pay systems in the state sector and in local and regional government, October 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU) <http://www.epsu.org/a/6248>
- EPSU response to EU 'roadmap for equality' consultation, September 2009 (EN) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5768>
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- EPSU General Work Plan 2010 – 2014, based on EPSU Congress resolutions adopted June 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5934#plan>
- Sectoral Work Programmes 2009 – 2014 (HSS, LRG, PUT : EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU – NEA : EN/FR/DE/RU) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5934#sector>
- The Financial and Economic Crisis, Consequences for the public sector and economy at large, an EPSU response - EPSU actions, adopted at the EPSU Executive Committee, 21 April 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5074>
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- Toolkit on demographic change, age management and competencies in the gas sector in Europe, J. Pillinger, October 2009 (EN + summary EN/FR/DE/IT/BG/CZ/RO/CRO) <http://www.epsu.org/a/6092>
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- EPSU-HOSPEEM Statement on the Proposal for a Directive on the Application of Patients' Rights in Cross-border Healthcare <http://www.epsu.org/a/6009>

- EPSU/UNI Europa report on third-party violence: "Policies, strategies and implementation: How issues of third party violence have been tackled in practice by social partners in the commerce, hospital, private security and local and regional government sectors", September 2009 (EN/FR/DE) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5866>
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- Framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector, signed on 17 July 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU) <http://www.epsu.org/a/5581>
- EPSU Campaign Healthcare for all ! Declaration of the EPSU Executive Committee on the draft directive on the application of patients' rights in cross border healthcare, adopted by the Executive Committee on 21 April 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/SV/RU) <http://www.epsu.org/a/4912>
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Resolutions adopted at the 8th EPSU Congress, June 2009 (EN/FR/DE/ES/IT/SV/RU – TK/CZ) <http://www.epsu.org/r/493>

- R.1. Quality Public Services – Quality of Life, <http://www.epsu.org/a/5524>
- R.2. Collective Bargaining and Social Dialogue, <http://www.epsu.org/a/5530>
- R.3. Equal Pay, adopted at the 8th EPSU Congress, June 2009 <http://www.epsu.org/a/5534>
- R.4. Health and Social Services <http://www.epsu.org/a/5535>
- R.5. Local and Regional Government <http://www.epsu.org/a/5536>
- R.6. National and European Administration <http://www.epsu.org/a/5538>
- R.7. Utilities <http://www.epsu.org/a/5539>
- R.A.1. Strengthening European Public Sector Unions <http://www.epsu.org/a/5541>

- R.A.2. Migration <http://www.epsu.org/a/5542>
- R.A.3. Equal Pay in female-dominated sectors - Put an end to differences between male- and female-dominated occupations and sectors <http://www.epsu.org/a/5543>
- E.R.1. Emergency resolution on the financial and economic crisis <http://www.epsu.org/a/5540>
- E.R.2. Emergency resolution on Supporting Trade Union Rights – No to Free Trade with Columbia <http://www.epsu.org/a/5545>
- S.R.1. The European Social Model: the four freedoms of the European Internal Market vs. national trade union rights <http://www.epsu.org/a/5546>

Meetings

EPSU GOVERNING BODIES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Executive Committee	26-27 March	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/26
Executive Committee	21 April	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/422
Executive Committee	8 and 11 June	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/4970
Executive Committee	9-10 November	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/119 www.epsu.org/a/5934 and www.epsu.org/a/5293

EPSU Congress

EPSU Congress Resolutions Committee	6 February	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/349
EPSU 8 th Congress	8-11 June	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/4465 www.epsu.org/r/349

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE

14th Meeting of the EPSU Gender Equality Committee to be renamed Women's and Gender Equality Committee	5 May	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/28 www.epsu.org/a/4815
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EPSU STANDING COMMITTEES

Health and Social Services

30 th meeting of the Standing Committee on Health and Social Services	30 March	Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/2 www.epsu.org/r/430
31 st meeting of the Standing Committee on Health and Social Services	4 November	Luxembourg	www.epsu.org/r/506
Workshop on Social Services	5 November	Luxembourg	www.epsu.org/r/507 and www.epsu.org/a/5688
2 nd meeting of the EPSU strategy group on the proposed Directive on the application of Patient's rights in cross-border healthcare	25 February	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/4570

Social Dialogue

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Hospital Sector, Prevention of sharp injuries	- 26 January - 27 February - 7 April - 8 May - 2 June	Brussels Brussels Brussels Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/20 www.epsu.org/a/4432 and www.epsu.org/a/4431 www.epsu.org/a/4593 www.epsu.org/a/4775 , www.epsu.org/a/4954
Social Dialogue hospitals drafting sharps	- 10 March - 28 April - 14 May		

Technical Seminar on new skill Needs	16 September	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/5404 and www.epsu.org/a/5403
Hospital Sector Social Dialogue Committee Plenary meeting	- 2 June - 8 December	Brussels Brussels	www.epsu.org/r/346 and www.epsu.org/a/5838
Conference "RESPECT – Successful approaches to deal with third-party violence	22 October	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/5740 and www.epsu.org/a/5739
Multi-sectoral initiative on third-party violence at work, Joint working group meeting	1 July	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/5469
3rd party violence mgt Committee	- 24 March - October	Brussels	
• Technical seminar on Retention	27 October	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/5698 and www.epsu.org/a/5697

National and European Administration

www.epsu.org/r/4

NEA Chair's meeting	- 13 March - 6 July	London Stockholm	
31 st meeting of the Standing Committee on National and European Administration	26 May	Luxembourg	www.epsu.org/a/4823
32 nd meeting of the Standing Committee on National and European Administration	15 October	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/5598
Joint NEA/LRG seminar on Quality Public Finances	27 May	Luxembourg	www.epsu.org/a/5397 and www.epsu.org/a/4871
PSI-PCS-ST seminar on the State Sector in the Balkans	4-6 October	Ohrid	
Joint NEA/LRG workshop on trade union actions for migrant workers and main issues faced by staff dealing with migrant	3-4 November	Athens	www.epsu.org/a/5466 and www.epsu.org/a/5795

Social Dialogue

www.epsu.org/r/62

5 th TUNED/EUPAN Steering Group Meeting (stress)	20 January	Prague	www.epsu.org/a/4369
6 th TUNED/EUPAN Social Dialogue Working Group meeting	3 February	Brussels	www.epsu.org/a/4373 and www.epsu.org/a/4581
TUNED/EUPAN conference "Improving trust in central government administrations through effective social dialogue"	29-30 April	Prague	www.epsu.org/a/4613
TUNED/EUPAN Trust project meeting (statement)	20 May	Prague	
DG/TUNED Plenary Social Dialogue meeting (test phase)	18 June	Prague	www.epsu.org/a/5165
8 th TUNED/EUPAN Social Dialogue Working Group	16 November	Malmö	www.epsu.org/a/5865
Trust Project Steering	19 March	Brussels	
Social Dialogue Steering Group	20 May	Prague	
Social Dialogue NEA Project Steering	7 July 20 October	Stockholm Stockholm	
7 th TUNED/EUPAN Social Dialogue Working Group and Trust, follow-up	16 September	Stockholm	
DG/TUNED Plenary Social Dialogue	11 December	Sweden	www.epsu.org/a/6025
EUPAN Taskforce on future of Social Dialogue	7 October 23 November	Brussels Stockholm	

EUPAN Social Dialogue evaluation taskforce	19 October	Stockholm
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Local and Regional Government

www.epsu.org/r/3

President and Vice-Presidents LRG	- 9-10 February - 10 December	Lisbon Brussels
32 nd Standing Committee on Local and Regional Government	28 May	Luxembourg
33 rd Standing Committee on Local and Regional Government	24 September	Brussels

www.epsu.org/a/4822

www.epsu.org/a/5400

Other LRG activities

Joint LRG/NEA workshop on “Quality Public Finances (see previous section)	27 May	Luxembourg
EPSU Firefighters network meeting	23 September	Brussels
ETUC/EPSU activity “civil society dialogue: bringing together the workers from Turkey and the European Union	16-20 November	Ankara

www.epsu.org/a/5397

and www.epsu.org/a/4871

www.epsu.org/r/315 ,

www.epsu.org/a/5917

and www.epsu.org/a/5775

www.epsu.org/a/5840

European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee in Local and Regional Government

www.epsu.org/r/73

Workshop on “Integration of Migrants and implementing diversity policies in local and regional administration	4 March	Brussels
Steering Group meeting	- 9 March - 10 September	Brussels Brussels
Working group on the impact of the financial economic crisis on local and regional government and restructuring	30 March	Brussels
Plenary meeting of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Local and Regional Government	5 June	Brussels
Multi-sectoral initiative on third-party violence at work, Joint working group meeting	1 July	Brussels
Working Group on Social Procurement meeting	9 October	Brussels
Conference “RESPECT – Successful approaches to deal with third-party violence	22 October	Brussels
Social dialogue LRG Plenary	11 December	Brussels

www.epsu.org/a/4867

www.epsu.org/a/4763

and www.epsu.org/a/4869

www.epsu.org/a/5345

www.epsu.org/a/5469

www.epsu.org/a/5920

www.epsu.org/a/5740

and www.epsu.org/a/5739

www.epsu.org/a/5972

Public Utilities

30th meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities 14 May Luxembourg www.epsu.org/r/16
www.espu.org/r/428

31st meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities 29 September Brussels www.epsu.org/r/450

Social Dialogue in the Electricity sector www.epsu.org/r/63

Social Dialogue Electricity WG 10 March www.epsu.org/a/4759
Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee, - 22 June Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5238
Electricity Plenary meeting - 11 December Budapest www.epsu.org/a/4258
and www.epsu.org/a/4251

Electricity Social Dialogue committee 7 October Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5815
Social partner workshop on Climate Change – Electricity – Employment 10 December Budapest www.epsu.org/a/5819
Consequences

Social Dialogue in the Gas Sector

www.epsu.org/r/98

Social Dialogue Gas project Steering - 5 February Brussels www.epsu.org/a/4559
- 29 April Brussels www.epsu.org/a/4961
- 8 September Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5710

Sectoral Social Dialogue committee for the European gas sector Working group :
- 19 March Brussels
- 5 October Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5803
Plenary :
- 26 June Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5366
- 2 December Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5998

Demographic Change and Competencies in the European Gas sector: Ensuring quality and security the challenge, Eurogas/EMCEF/EPSU Conference 4 November Brussels www.epsu.org/a/5743

Other activities

• Improving the co-ordination of collective bargaining in the energy sector in Central and West Europe 27 January Brussels www.epsu.org/a/4535
and www.epsu.org/a/5821

EPSU/ETUI Collective Bargaining CWE - 24-25 March Brussels www.epsu.org/a/4769
Energy - 6 October Brussels www.epsu.org/a/4764
www.epsu.org/a/5811
and www.epsu.org/a/5686

ETUC/EPSU/ EMCEF activity “civil society dialogue – bringing together the workers from Turkey and the European Union” 21-23 October Ankara www.epsu.org/a/5748
and www.epsu.org/a/5749

South East European (SEE) Energy Community

www.epsu.org/r/239

Social Dialogue Workshop on the Energy Community 16 June Vienna www.epsu.org/a/5304

2nd Social Forum Energy Community - 12-13 Nov Tirana www.epsu.org/a/6027
- 12-13 Dec

The South East European Energy Roundtable Conference (EPSU/PSI/FES) 17-18 September Belgrade www.epsu.org/a/5750

Waste

Transnational companies, European Works Councils and the waste industry, 26-27 November Brussels www.epsu.org/a/1061
www.epsu.org/a/5765

Facing up to change

Water

World Water Forum

20-22 March

Istanbul

www.epsu.org/r/38
www.epsu.org/a/4813

European Works Councils

EPSU EWC coordinators network

- 13 May
- 28 September

Luxembourg
Luxembourg

www.epsu.org/r/69
www.epsu.org/a/5049
www.epsu.org/a/5240
and www.epsu.org/a/5779

Transnational companies, European Works Councils and the Waste industry, Facing up to change

26-27 November

Brussels

EWCS – Learning and practicing, a project for the European Energy sector, preparatory meeting

14 December

Brussels

www.epsu.org/a/5746
and
www.epsu.org/a/6018

Coordination of Collective Bargaining

Collective Bargaining Project Follow-up

17 March

Brussels

EPSU Project Conference : EPSU Social

3-4 December

Brussels

Dialogue and Collective Bargaining

Conference Decent work in the Public Services

www.epsu.org/r/87
www.epsu.org/a/4532
www.epsu.org/a/5512

ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ETUC Executive Committee

- 17-18 March
- 27-28 May
- 8 July
- 20-21 October
- 1-2 December

Brussels
Brussels
Brussels
Brussels
Brussels

OTHER ACTIVITIES

ETUC SC (EiFs)

5 February

Brussels

ETUC SC

28 April

Brussels

17 September

Brussels

19 November

Brussels

ETUC/SDA Conference “The recast EWC directive : better information and consultation rights for European Works Council

Tripartite Social Summit

19 March

Brussels

PSI Executive Board

22-24 April
17-18 November

Geneva
Geneva

PSI Health Task Force

27-29 May

Geneva

Joint NEA-LRG ETUI-REHS Education workshop : Migration policy and migrant workers’ rights

3-4 November

Athens

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 250 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local and national administration, in all European countries including in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI).

For more information on EPSU and our work please go to:

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EPSU General Secretary: Carola Fischbach-Pyttel

The four EPSU sectors are:

- National and European Administration
- Local and regional government
- Social and health services
 - Public utilities

