



## EPSU Work Programme 2019-2024

### Fighting for a Future for All – People and Our Planet over Profits

*Adopted by the EPSU Executive Committee on 5 – 6 November 2019*

#### Introduction

The EPSU work programme provides a framework for planning and coordinating activities to implement the Congress Programme of Action and affiliates' resolutions adopted in Dublin. It links with the work programmes drawn up by the sectoral standing committees and women and gender equality committee.<sup>1</sup>

Our Congress committed EPSU to be an active actor to bring about the fundamental change that is needed to deliver an inclusive future for all, as was eloquently expressed by the President of the Republic of Ireland in his speech at EPSU Congress. There is an urgency to act to address growing inequalities and respond to the anger of many who do not benefit from the current economic model, who see the welfare state, democracy and fundamental rights being undermined and attacked. Climate change and exploitation of our environment also threaten humankind. New technologies and digitalisation need to be managed and serve the public interest.

The work programme's motto, ***People and Our Planet Over Profits***, sums up how we can deliver this 'Future for All'. Developing gender-sensitive and inclusive public services is key to defending democracy and to achieving the goals set out in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR), the Global Compact on migration and the climate agreements. Public service workers make this possible and they deserve the rights, the pay and the respect that go with it. Our ambition will guide the choices we make to focus on the actions that bring about fundamental change, even if the individual steps are small.

EPSU can deliver. Our joint challenge as unions in Europe, with social movements and globally with PSI, is to make working together more effective, realising that the fundamental change we want needs the committed involvement and collective action of us all.

The work programme identifies the broad themes of our work, with concrete objectives and activities: what do we – the "EPSU community" - want to achieve in the coming years and how can we work together to maximise our chances of success? EPSU deliberately maintains a broad agenda that links workers' rights with women's rights, and with social, economic and environmental justice. This positions EPSU as a progressive trade union that works for social (and environmental) justice and equality.

The work programme is not set in stone will be updated in light of changing circumstances and in response to external agendas (for example, the upcoming work programme of the new European Commission). A mid-term review is also proposed for half way through the Congress period (spring 2022).

#### Key priorities

Below are the priorities that are set out in more schematic detail in the [attached](#) table.

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<sup>1</sup> Available on the EPSU website

## **1. Delivering public finance and investment**

Making the case for public services is making the case for public finance. It is a key thread throughout the work programme. Public spending and redistribution of wealth are central pillars of democratic, equal, and cohesive societies. According to a recent IMF [study](#) roughly 40% of foreign direct investment is "phantom capital" being used to avoid or pay lower corporate taxes, pointing to the need for fair and progressive tax systems that put limits on wealth accumulation. We will continue to develop our capacity to influence and change the frameworks that prevent the necessary public investment in public services. In the European Union this is the EU's economic governance process. We intervene at the relevant points of the European Semester, aiming for a co-ordinated European public investment programme that will create good, high-skilled jobs, deliver tax justice, develop public services and realise the pillar of social rights and tackle climate change. Globally we will work with PSI to bring about change.

## **2. Promoting public services and opposing the liberalisation of public services**

In sectoral policies, as well as in trade policy, EPSU argues that liberalisation (competition) does not improve public services, on the contrary. Building on research and in cooperation with others we make the case for public services based on principles of risk-sharing and universality (from the right to water, right to energy, the right to care, to the right to good administration). We will work with others to ensure that big data serves first and foremost the people and planet, and not private profit. We will support initiatives to encourage insourcing and remunicipalisation of services as well as to better protect services that are outsourced (e.g. through public procurement). EPSU will stress the role of public services in defending democracy and fundamental values and opposing nationalism, racism, xenophobia and the extreme right. We choose solidarity, cooperation and European solutions when engaging in the Future of Europe discussions.

## **3. Addressing climate change and supporting a Green and Social Deal**

Climate change and growing environmental problems will increasingly demand public intervention. Ensuring a 'just transition' for workers and citizens will be a recurrent theme in the next years, calling for strengthened coalition building by social and environmental activists. EPSU will actively engage in bringing about a Green and Social Deal that leads to changes in our economic model.

## **4. Creating quality jobs and ensuring workers' rights**

Quality jobs, employment rights and equal pay in all EPSU's sectors is a constant demand. Information and consultation rights, collective bargaining and social dialogue are not yet fully developed. EPSU aims to build union strength and power through supporting organising and recruitment activities (especially in Eastern Europe) and contributing to initiatives to build national sectoral collective bargaining structures. In each of EPSU sectors we aim to develop and strengthen European social dialogue structures and ensure that they addresses key challenges including the restructuring of public services brought about by digitalisation.

## **5. Strengthening EPSU's voice**

Increasing the visibility of our actions requires good communications at all levels and the ability to influence national confederations and the ETUC. We will aim to step up our work with the ETUC and strengthen our coordination to make progress around key priorities. We will develop a long-term communication strategy to raise our profile as opinion-maker. We will also continue to use fixed moments (e.g., International Women's Day March 8) to raise our profile and that of public services and public service workers.

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Links to Congress Programme of Action (PoA) and resolutions	What are the goals? What do we want to achieve?	What are the instruments and timeline?	Main responsibility and source of funding / budget
<b>Democracy, human rights and values</b>			
<p><i>Introduction PoA, emergency resolution on peace, democracy and human rights, resolution X on Palestine</i></p>	<p>Stronger contribution to broader trade union political work to counter anti-democratic developments and secure peace.</p> <p>Make use of the global 2030 agenda sustainable development goals (SDGs) as a framework for advancing social and economic justice. Building support for public services as the instrument to deliver on SDGs, climate change, inequalities.</p> <p>Organise a discussion on the <i>Future of Europe Conference</i> and the Treaty changes needed for public service workers and public services</p>	<p>Input into ETUC, PERC, PSI etc</p> <p>Involvement of affiliates/confederations in national implementation processes</p> <p>LRG work on SDGs and decent work (e.g. #Timefor8) Climate change and just transition policies 'EU Green and Social Deal'</p> <p>PSI mission to Palestine and Israel (2020) Disseminate information on 'Justice for Palestine'</p> <p>Debate in the EPSU Executive in April or November 2020 Possibly a working group?</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Affiliates LRG UTIL</p> <p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Executive Committee Affiliates</p>
<p>Demanding fair trade and investment agreements <i>PoA A7</i></p>	<p>Development of a progressive trade and investment agenda, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing further inroads into democratic space (liberalisation commitments, regulatory cooperation, investor protection)</li> </ul>	<p>Work with ETUC (International Matters and Trade Committee), PSI, civil society</p> <p>Participation in EU Domestic Advisory Groups (DAGs) (focus on EU-Canada and EU-Ukraine)</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Public services network</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforceability of the sustainable development chapters (ILO Conventions, EPSR, environmental provisions)</li> <li>• Strengthening human rights obligations, due diligence, joint liability of companies</li> </ul>	<p>Stocktaking seminar on EPSU work in cooperation with Austrian AK (Chamber of Labour) end 2019</p> <p>Input into EU-UK trade agreement discussions</p> <p>Contribute to regulation of digital trade and data flows (ETUC trade Committee and Internal Market Committee)</p>	<p>Affiliates</p>
<b>Future of public services</b>			
<p>Fighting for stronger public finances and tax justice <i>PoA section A1</i></p>	<p>We will continue to push for improvements to EU and global legislative initiatives on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (public) country-by-country reporting by multinational companies</li> <li>• (common) consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB)</li> <li>• potentially the financial transactions tax</li> </ul> <p>We will also continue to highlight cuts in tax administrations across Europe and their impact on the fight against tax avoidance and push for progressive tax systems</p>	<p>Securing a European Parliament tax (sub) Committee will be important to maintain pressure for EU policy initiatives (2019)</p> <p>Work with ETUC (Economic Committee), PSI (CICTAR), civil society on tax policy to secure focus on tax justice. Contribute to ETUC work on digital tax and to address tax avoidance, including through possible due diligence legislation.</p> <p>Upcoming research on tax inspectors Lobbying in European Semester (EU and national levels), Macroeconomic Dialogue (directly and through ETUC) Assist in promoting PSI public debt work</p>	<p>Executive Committee NEA</p>

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<p>Arguing for an alternative economic model <i>PoA section A1 and resolution VI</i></p>	<p>Continue to press for public investment in public services and infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlighting the negative role of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)</li> <li>• securing a ‘golden rule’ to mitigate public debt requirements and support investment</li> <li>• ‘socialising’ EU economic governance</li> <li>• more emphasis on well-being and distributive policies (beyond GDP)</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing work with ETUC, ETUI, PSI, civil society (on PPPs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and promote briefing “11 arguments against PPPs” – prepare workshop on PPPs with ETUC, NGOs (2020)</li> <li>• Revisit Commission (DG Regio) Guide on PPPs in eastern Europe.</li> <li>• Lobbying in European Semester, Macroeconomic Dialogue, Annual Growth Survey consultation and other forums to implement EPSR and ‘activate’ SGI Protocol.</li> <li>• Promote remunicipalisation/insourcing and public ownership</li> </ul>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Public services network</p> <p>LRG Standing Committees</p>
<p>Getting more and better public services for all; defending democracy and the rule of law and fighting corruption; and resisting privatisation and liberalisation to defend quality public services <i>PoA A3-5 and resolution II</i></p>	<p>Exploring potential for new EU initiatives building on SGI Protocol and EPSR</p> <p>More visibility on public services</p> <p>Anti-corruption work</p> <p>More awareness on failures of private models</p>	<p>Promote right to energy and right to care initiatives, including in ETUC and its various committees (e.g. Social Protection Committees)</p> <p>Develop a long-term communication plan – Fighting for a Future for All – with focus on public services and stories from trade unionists (we make it happen!)</p> <p>Support implementation of Whistleblowing Directive (2019-2021) – training session</p> <p>Research and communications work on privatisation impact – cooperation with PSI and input into peopleoverprof.it platform</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Standing Committees and WGEC Affiliates</p> <p>NEA</p>

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	Safe and adequate staffing levels in all sectors	Develop and promote the safe staffing levels platform with PSI and through increasing sectoral and cross-sectoral visibility for the problems. Develop an action plan to obtain changes to public debt rules and stronger recommendations for more investment (e.g, in European Semester), possibly backed with European action(s)	Executive Committee (Spring 2020)
Getting the best from the digital transformation of public services <i>PoA A6</i>	Contribute to work on democratic governance of digitalisation	ETUC, ETUI, PSI work on data privacy, artificial intelligence, big data, e-commerce  ‘Mainstreaming’ digitalisation across EPSU’s work, with a focus on the impacts of digitalisation on services, employment and skills  Work with ETUC and other ETUFs on monitoring the introduction of platforms in public services and in particular in HSS and social services  Research project on impact of digitalisation on public service jobs led by OSE 2021-22 (tbc)	Standing Committees and WGEC Public Services Network
Tackling climate change and environmental damage <i>PoA A8 and resolution I</i>	EU climate change and adaptation strategy (including Green New Deal)	Work with ETUC (Sustainable Development, Energy and Climate Change Committee) and NGOs (Right2Energy coalition, Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) and others) to promote role of public services as part of climate change strategies.	UTIL

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		Continue to support climate mobilisations  Electricity and Gas social dialogues	
Improving services for migrants and refugees <i>PoA A9 and resolution VIII</i>	EU Directive on minimum standards for reception  More initiatives in social dialogue to support integration of migrants and refugees	Work with ETUC (Mobility, Migration and Inclusion Committee), civil society  NEA and LRG social dialogue committees  Building the EUCare Network	NEA (also LRG) Affiliates
<b>Future of work in public services</b>			
Defending fundamental rights at work <i>PoA B1</i>	Here we will work with ETUC for more and better EU social policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing the Agreement on trade union rights to information and consultation in central government</li> <li>• Strengthen rights and solidarity initiatives in support of national unions, European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)</li> <li>• Monitoring the implementation of the Transparency and Predictability of Working Conditions (TPWC) Directive to ensure public sector workers are not excluded.</li> </ul>	ETUC, PSI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore appropriate mechanisms – ILO and/or Council of Europe, support ETUC initiative around collective bargaining rights; Seek more ratifications of ILO Convention 151</li> <li>• Follow possible EU initiatives on due diligence (link also to tax), minimum income, minimum wages (2020-2021)</li> <li>• Project on implementation of TPWCD and denial of rights to public service worker (co-operation with Eurocop and Euromil)</li> <li>• Follow-up to Court judgment 24 October 2019 on information and consultation rights, including consider appeal, joint work with ETUC/ETUFs on</li> </ul>	Executive Committee, Standing Committees, WGEC  Possible ad hoc working group on EU proposal on minimum wages/collective bargaining

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		implications for legally binding social dialogue agreements.	
<p>Strengthening collective bargaining and improving pay and conditions <i>PoA B2 and resolutions II and VII</i></p>	<p>Developing EPSU’s collective bargaining work with focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to collective bargaining and to strike</li> <li>• Sectoral bargaining coverage</li> <li>• Working time</li> <li>• Gender pay gap</li> </ul> <p>Tackling work intensity and low wages, particularly low pay in care and other sectors dominated by women</p> <p>Improving access to professional training and development</p>	<p>Support where appropriate ETUC (Collective Bargaining Committee) initiatives on support for sector collective bargaining, shorter working time and fair wages</p> <p>Potential project with Euromil and Eurocop focusing on exclusions and restrictions on rights to CB and strike Follow possible EU legislative initiatives on collective bargaining, minimum wages</p> <p>Using March 8 International Women’s Day and other campaign moments to rise awareness on gender equality</p> <p>Sectoral social dialogue work on training (e.g., hospitals and electricity)</p>	<p>Executive Committee Standing committees, and WGEC</p> <p>WGEC</p> <p>Standing Committees</p>
<p>Promoting and extending the European social dialogue <i>PoA B3</i></p>	<p>Developing social dialogue in all EPSU’s sectors (priority social services, waste and reactivating gas social dialogue)</p> <p>Strengthening and extending EWCs</p>	<p>Consider introducing project on social dialogue in waste (and water) 2021-22</p> <p>Further project on EWCs in social care (2020-21)</p>	<p>Standing Committees</p>

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		Prepare for discussion on effectiveness of the social dialogue in EPSU's sectors (linked to mid-term review), assessing for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developments with employers organisations</li> <li>• link with national level collective bargaining</li> <li>• European initiatives to build capacity.</li> </ul>	Executive Committee
Defending workers against privatisation and outsourcing <i>PoA B4</i>	Ongoing work on reclaiming public services and public procurement, PPPs, concessions	EPSU, PSI work on reclaiming public services  Contribute to TNI conference on reclaiming public services (December 2019) and joint project with Syndex (2020)  Upcoming EC guide on socially responsible public procurement (2019-2020)  Explore with ETUC and others how to strengthen conditionality in public contracts (having a collective agreement, respect for Paris agreement, tax compliance)	Standing committees  LRG  LRG
Ensuring that workers benefit from digitalisation <i>PoA B5</i>	Ensure rights to information, consultation and collective bargaining over digitalisation	EPSU collective bargaining project on digitalisation and collective bargaining (2019-2020) and follow-up  Research project on impact of digitalisation on public service jobs led by OSE 2021-22 (tbc) Participate in cross-sector negotiations on agreement on digitalisation (2019-20) and in future ETUC work on	Standing committees

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		digitalisation	
Enforce and improve occupational health and safety <i>PoA B6</i>	Key priorities will be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• secure EU Directives or agreements on psycho-social risks and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), carcinogens</li> <li>• Implement ILO Convention on violence and harassment at work</li> <li>• Better implement existing risk assessment obligations</li> </ul>	Work with ETUC (Health and Safety Committee), ETUI Social dialogue committees	Standing Committees, Firefighters and prison officers networks
Getting more and better jobs from tackling climate change <i>PoA B7 and resolution I</i>	Securing commitments for a just transition  Circular economy	Work with ETUC  Electricity and gas social dialogues	UTIL
Delivering gender equality at work <i>PoA B8 and resolutions III and V</i>	Securing progress on equal pay, low pay in sectors dominated by women, work-life balance and women's representation	Work with ETUC Women's Committee on gender equality and women's empowerment and rights  Further work on 'mainstreaming' gender across each of EPSU's sectors (and with specific project in each sector 2020)  Further action on gender pay gap and women's low-pay following project and conference (May 2020)	WGEC  Standing Committee  Affiliates

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		Follow-up to EU work-life balance package Disseminate ETUC implementation toolkit, further work on non-legislative part of package (investment in childcare and eldercare)  Update of EPSU women’s representativeness study (before next Congress)	
Fighting discrimination and promoting equality in the workplace <i>PoA B9 and resolution IX</i>		Facilitate and raise awareness about minority ethnic workers’ network (BAME)  Follow-up to EU study on trade union strategies to tackle discrimination (2020)	Executive Committee Affiliates  WGEC
<b>Future of public service trade unions</b>			
Boosting recruitment and organising  <i>PoA C1 and resolution IV</i>	Focus on supporting affiliates build membership, including in private companies delivering public services	Sectoral strategies to map potential membership and set target  Organising and campaigns officers in eastern Europe and supporting work by affiliates on organising and recruitment  Support for training (annual ETUI seminars) Work with ETUC/PERC organising academy Contribute to upcoming ETUC organising committee	Executive Committee Standing Committees

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Improving the representation of women and young workers <i>PoA C2 and resolution IV</i>	Supporting EPSU's youth work, gender equality work Improve participation in EPSU WGEC meetings	Building and extending the youth network to cover all unions	Executive Committee Youth Network  WGEC
Building a stronger EPSU <i>PoA C3</i>	Agreeing joint media strategies and other actions around key priorities with a focus on social media including video messaging  Improve coordination of lobbying particularly in relation to EU legislation	Communication strategy to raise voice of EPSU Making our work together more effective through higher engagement in activities and actions  Closer cooperation on public service issues with ETUCE (education), police, military, ETF  Pan-European conferences for sectors  Assessment of priorities	Executive Committee and Standing Committees    Finance Working Group  Constitutional Working Group (follow-up Executive Committee 4 June 2019)  Mid-term review (2022)