

European framework-agreement EUPAE/TUNED for a quality service in Central Government Administrations

Preamble

Serving the general interest for the sake of the common good of the populations is the core mission of all public institutions including of the European Union. It provides legitimacy for their actions. The common values below are closely linked to this source of legitimacy as well as to fundamental human rights.

The European social partners - EUPAE (employers) and TUNED (trade unions), for the central government administrations sector - stress the crucial role public authorities play in providing, funding, implementing and organizing public services in a way which meets users' needs.

In a context of a major economic and social crisis, affirming common values and commitments to implement them are an essential vector for the trust of users and the image of administrations and public services.

In this text, a value is defined as a reference system which stakeholders can identify with, commit to and feel responsible for. Moreover, values are both a beacon for public action and an incentive for public employees and employers.

EUPAE and TUNED affirm their commitment to the public service values, including those contained in Protocol 26 on Services of General Interest annexed to the EU Treaty (TFEU) i.e. a high level of quality, safety and affordability, equal treatment and the promotion of universal access and of users rights, as well as to the fundamental rights established by the Charter of the European Union i.e. dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity and justice.

These values also show the adaptability of public services through combining traditional values with emerging, democratic, professional and ethical values.

They reflect the coherence of the overall public action and are a tool to promote a social dialogue. They are the glue and connection between the administrations, their public employees and society.

The implementation of these values relies on the well-being of public employees and requires

- Effective practice of social dialogue
- Sufficient resources
- And consultation of the users

The social partners of the European social dialogue Committee for central government administrations agree to uphold the Framework Agreement which goes beyond a mere statement of principles in that it aims at:

- Stressing the common values while encouraging their adoption and implementation, in as concrete a manner as possible, by all the institutions and workers in central administrations;
- Contributing to the discussions at national and European level in order to facilitate the development and adaptability of public services which are at the heart of a social and democratic Europe;
- Guiding the action and the work of the Committee.

Values and commitments

Service and respect of the rule of law

1. Public employees and employers shall implement public policies aimed at the general interest, serving the common good.
2. The action of public services shall operate under the authority and leadership of governments, in respect of applicable national and European legislations and international standards.

Welcome

3. Public employees and employers must be committed to welcoming the users in the best conditions. To this effect, public employers must ensure a sufficient level of staff and competence and provide suitable offices and equipment. The key words are availability and courtesy. Public employees shall adopt an appropriate attitude and appearance.
4. Users' needs will be anticipated and whenever possible taken into account by implementing a proximity-based approach. Accessibility will be maximized, including in terms of office opening hours, premises arrangement, single contact points, phone hotlines or internet sites.
5. The responsiveness of the services will be measured through the rapidity in implementing commitments and respecting deadlines within the public service.
6. Public employers shall clearly define the responsibilities of public employees towards users, in the framework of the global responsibility which they primarily assume themselves.

Equity

7. Public employers and employees shall handle the dossiers and situations in full impartiality. On the basis of the necessary solidarity between members of our society, services are accessible and adapted to everyone's needs and difficulties.
8. Public employers and employees shall ensure that services reflect the diversity of society. Public employers are attentive to this in recruitment, career and in the organization of services.

Integrity

9. Public employees shall undertake not to allow private interests and personal or political links jeopardize public decisions and management.
10. Public employers and employees must be alert so that to prevent and signal any violations of the values included in the present document including integrity. To this effect, public employers will protect employees efficiently against any negative consequence of their involvement in the fight to maintain these values.

Efficiency

11. The service to users shall be provided in the best conditions of quality, efficiency, rapidity and optimal use of resources on the basis of transparent and reliable indicators. The users will be involved in the analysis of needs and assessment of the outcomes of the services.

12. The activity of the public institutions shall operate in respect for the environment and for its preservation, out of concern for an eco-responsible management of natural resources and the preservation of the health of citizens.

Quality of life at work

13. The first element of well-being of public employees, regardless of their function, is the meaning of their work, i.e. the contribution to the best organization of living together in society.
14. Public employers will take great care in ensuring competence development, notably through training, with a view to ensuring attractiveness of career paths. They are mindful of the quality of management, which is the essential link between the overall organisation and the work unit, and of the best use of employees' competences by striving for the best match between profiles and jobs.
15. Just as public employees are committed to their organization and to carrying out most efficiently their public service tasks, public employers shall commit equally to their employees, particularly in terms of good working conditions including correct, sufficient and gender neutral remuneration, social protection, work-life balance, and fight against all forms of discrimination. In addition, public employers shall commit to combatting, in as much as possible, precarious work.
16. Public employers shall respect and facilitate trade union freedom and the resulting rights and duties as a guarantee of justice and social cohesion.

Communication and transparency

17. Public employers and employees shall give priority to efficient and regular communication to the users, in compliance with their expectations, as well as to internal communication and through the most appropriate channels
18. Public employers and employees shall be mindful of the maximum transparency of administrative procedures, in order to allow a better understanding of the public action and its objectives.
19. Users will have access to all their personal data which are protected by the public employees and employers. They receive clear information on their use.

Follow-up

20. The commitments contained in the present agreement will be subject to follow-ups planned at least every two years within the European social dialogue committee for central government administrations.

Signed in Brussels on 12 December 2012 by

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