



European Action Day 7 April 2016 against the marketisation and commercialisation of healthcare

Dear trade union colleagues,

For several years we have seen the mechanisms of privatisation and commercialisation of health and welfare getting a more important role and influence.

The very principles of the Maastricht Treaty (freedom of establishment, free competition) favour this trend, as well as the austerity policies that aimed at greatly reducing public spending.

Negotiations of multilateral treaties (TTIP, TISA, CETA ..) also bring about important risks that the sectors of health and social welfare will operate more in the way that service markets do.

It seems urgent for us to sensitise the public opinion and to raise awareness to policy makers about the real challenges behind this development, and about the fact that the model of universal social protection and effective (rights-based) access to health care, that we know in most European countries, is in real danger.

We propose to organise on 7 April, World Health Day, a first European Day against the privatisation and commercialisation of health and social welfare/protection/security. This could consist of:

- A central activity in Brussels with a 2-3 hour conference/seminar followed by a "action for the media/media campaign" and a press conference. The Belgian unions can ensure the organisation, in partnership with the Belgian Platform for Action and the Belgian Health Solidarity Campaign "Social Protection for All" (contacts have already been made). What would be important is to be able to count – beyond the participants/activists from Belgium – on at least a few dozen participants from neighbouring countries and small delegations of several other countries that are also able (and willing) to bring to the attention their stories and evidence on the negative impact of an increased marketisation and commercialisation of health and social services at this conference/seminar.
- If possible, it could consist of decentralised symbolic and coordinated actions in the maximum number of countries (in each country the modalities, the number of participants and the size of the action can be decided), that could be relayed to the conference or the press conference in Brussels.
- The creation and dissemination of an interactive map of the marketisation and commercialisation of health in Europe. This would provide information to each organisation (to be presented at the national level on this occasion) a map showing for each country the mechanisms at work, and their effects on the population. Here we obviously need each of you: Could you quickly fill in for your country the EXCEL spreadsheet attached? From your answers we can develop the interactive map.

To amplify the maximum likely impact of such an initiative, we have established contact with other European networks that have already agreed to participate. This is the European Network against the Privatisation and Commercialisation of Health and Social Protection and the People's Health Movement Europe. But we will/would obviously count on you to involve other relevant national and European movements pursuing the same goal.

For the EPSU affiliates from Belgium
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CSC SP Guy Crijns
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