EPSU General Circular N°9 (2014)
To the affiliated unions representing members in the non-profit sector, in particular in health and social services

To the affiliated unions in the Health and Social Services and Local and Regional Government sectors

Ref: JWG/MM/ec
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Brussels, 15 July 2014

PESSIS 2
Promoting Employers’ Social Services Organizations in Social Dialogue
Invitation to an Informal Trade Union Contact Meeting
22 September 2014
13.00 – 17.00
International Trade Union House, 5 Bd du Roi Albert II, 1210 Brussels, Room B

Dear Colleagues,

Further to our General Circular No 5 (2014) of 14 April 2014 (cf. [http://www.epsu.org/a/10387](http://www.epsu.org/a/10387)) we would like to invite interested representatives of EPSU affiliates organizing in HSS and LRG and in particular in social services to participate in an informal trade union contact meeting at the ITUH in Brussels. This meeting on the afternoon of 22 September 2014 will precede the PESSIS 2 Final Conference on 23 September 2014.

The objectives of the informal trade union contact meeting will be to

- Provide an update on progress made towards building structures of social dialogue in the social services area at national and EU level and to together make a first assessment of the (provisional) outcomes of the PESSIS 2 Project
- Consider and coordinate the EPSU contributions to the PESSIS 2 Final Conference
- Discuss possible next steps in a process that could lead to the setting up of structures of sectorial social dialogue for personal social services (or relevant sub-sectors thereof such as elderly care, child care, care for persons with disabilities, etc.).
Since our previous circular, further project meetings involving EU-level stakeholders took place on 5 May 2014 and on 5 and 6 June 2014. At the mid-term project meeting in early June reports and recommendations from five countries (A, B, D, F, NL) were presented with a perspective to illustrate the level of interest and engagement of employers in social services to participate in a future European Sectorial Social Dialogue on social services.

Based on these reports it seems as if there is an interest amongst important employer organizations to be engaged in a social dialogue, i.a. around topics that have already been dealt with in the sectorial social dialogue committees for the hospital/health care and/or for the local and regional government sector. Most frequently mentioned were “recruitment and retention”, “health and safety at the workplace”, “mobility of workers”, “professional qualifications/LLL” and “socially responsible/sustainable public procurement”.

The five countries Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and The Netherlands were chosen first as they cover about half of the workers in residential and non-residential care across the EU 28 and second because they are characterized by an important share of not-for-profit providers of social services, employing in total an estimated 3.2 million workers.

In the mid-term seminar, information from a second mapping exercise of structures and main actors of social dialogue and collective bargaining in the field of social services for another five countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Lithuania, Poland) was shared, to be updated on 23 September 2014, with information for Sweden, to be included, too.

The issues to be discussed at our internal trade union contact meeting on 22.09.14 are:

- **Scope of the social dialogue** – whereas “scope” here has three dimensions:
  - The first dimension concerns the involvement of employers’ organizations representing different types of provision of social services, “public/local and regional authorities”, “not-for-profit/social economy” or “for profit/commercial”.
  - The second aspect concerns the question which sub-sectors (e.g. “elderly care”, “care for persons with disabilities”, “child care” or “homeless persons”) could be covered. Or put differently: For which of these subsectors would there be interested employers’ organizations and trade unions organizing workers there. The third aspect concerns the employers’ organizations interested, structures of social dialogue and/or collective agreements.
  - The third dimension is linked to the question which of the already existing employers’ organizations (such as e.g. CEMR) and which EU-level employers’ platforms still to be set up (e.g. to represent employers from the not-for-profit/social economy sector) would comply with criteria of representativity and would also be ready to engage in a sectorial social dialogue on social services.

- **Possible topics of common interest** for trade unions and employers in the sector of social services (or selected sub-sectors) to be addressed at EU-level in the future

- **Final Conference of PESSIS 2 Project on 23 September 2014**
Is this to mark the beginning of a “test phase” for a sectorial social dialogue on social services at EU-level?

Would this test phase – that would then directly involve the interested national affiliates of EPSU – concern employers and trade unions for both the publicly provided and for services delivered in the non-profit social sector to start with?

Are we heading towards a PESSIS 3 Project to further explore various options and methods how to build up a sectorial social dialogue on social services?

- **Articulation of sectorial and inter-sectorial social dialogue**: How to make the link between these two levels for topics important for social services, e.g. working time?

It is now crucial for the EPSU affiliates represented in the social services sector to get actively involved in the process in order to **underline our commitment** for developing this particular social dialogue. Resolution 8 of the EPSU Congress in Toulouse i.a. calls for a promotion of “the sectorial social dialogue at national and European level with representative employers’ organizations and within multinational companies” (n° 19).

This is underpinned by similar wording in the Resolutions 11 (see n° 12 and 13) and 10 (see n° 13).

**Practicalities**

This invitation is being translated into FR, DE, ES, RU and SV. It has been uploaded to page [http://www.epsu.org/a/10387](http://www.epsu.org/a/10387), as other documents (in EN only) to prepare the meeting.

Information on the PESSIS 2 project can be found under section [http://www.epsu.org/r/684](http://www.epsu.org/r/684), on the PESSIS 1 project under section [http://www.epsu.org/r/628](http://www.epsu.org/r/628). We had used the meeting of the Working Group “Social Services” of 13 March 2013 to assess the outcomes of the PESSIS 1 project (see [http://www.epsu.org/a/9089](http://www.epsu.org/a/9089)) and to discuss possible next steps.

On availability we will upload to page [http://www.epsu.org/a/10623](http://www.epsu.org/a/10623) the draft **programme of the Final Conference of the PESSIS 2 Project** on 23 September 2014.

For our trade union pre-meeting on the afternoon of 22 September 2014 at the ITUH we will provide active **interpretation** into English, French and German, with a possibility to speak Dutch, Spanish and Swedish (N.B.: This language regime still needs to be confirmed!). At the Final Conference of the PESSIS 2 Project on 23 September 2014 interpretation from and into EN, FR and DE will be offered by the project coordinator.

EPSU affiliates as a rule are assumed to **cover their costs for travel and accommodation**. There will be 5 sponsorships available from the PESSIS 2 project budget for EPSU affiliates. We suggest they go with priority to colleagues from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland (as country reports have been elaborated i.a. for these four countries and will be presented).

Please **register** by filling in the registration form on page [http://www.epsu.org/a/10387](http://www.epsu.org/a/10387) and by sending it by e-mail or fax to Emmanuelle Charles, **the latest by 8 September 2014**.
On 22 September 2014 the EPSU Secretariat will organise a reception with something to drink and eat for the participants of the two meetings, starting at 18h45 at the EPSU Office (Rue Joseph II, 40, 1000 Brussels, 3rd floor). Please indicate your interest in participating in this reception when registering.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Willem Goudriaan
General Secretary