



**FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES MEDECINS SALARIES
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF SALARIED DOCTORS**

**Registered Office/Siège
Social :**
39, rue Victor Massé
F-75009 Paris/France

<http://www.fems.net>

Presidency:
Dr. Claude Wetzel
Hôpitaux Universitaires
F-67098 Strasbourg/France
Tel +33 3 88 12 70 75 ou 76
GSM +33 6 60 55 56 16
Fax +33 3 88 12 70 74
claudewetzel@chru-strasbourg.fr

Permanent Secretariat:
Mrs Brigitte Jencik
Rue Guimard 15
B-1040 Brussels/Belgium
Tel. +32 27 36 60 66
Fax +32 27 32 99 72
e-mail: info@fems.net

Date :	26 -10 -2011	Document:	F11-096 EN
Title:	Europeanisation of health policies and systems European Health workers must not be the scapegoats of the crisis. Decent work is needed to improve Europe's health		
Authors:	EPSU – European Federation of Public Service Unions		

Europeanisation of health policies and systems

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) organises 8 million workers across the public sector. One of the core sectors is Health and Social Services. EPSU is the biggest organization of workers in Europe in the health sector. EPSU organised the biggest gathering in 2011 of health workers in Europe to discuss the effects of the crisis on health and Social Services workers in Bucharest on 18 and 19 October with over 100 health workers from more than 27 European countries.

The issues at stake for health workers range from the Europeanisation of National Health Care Systems and Services to how health care is going to be financed against the backdrop of the crisis and austerity policies. Health workers explained and gave feed back on the consequences of the crisis on health care in different European countries. It also proposed alternatives for financing national health systems. An Equitable and universal access to high quality and affordable health care services with the crisis situation is a major concern. This can only be done by investing in health and social care services – including using revenues from a FTT as an additional source of financing – as these sectors contribute significantly to both economic and employment growth as well as to social cohesion and inclusion

Another issue for health workers is the Cross-border mobility and migration in the sector. We identify a North-South and East-West flux of health care workers as well as cuts in public expenditure in the health sector. It is essential for European trade unions to highlight the effects this tendencies will have in our health system in the medium and long-term future. Linked to this issue is the effective recruitment and retention policies in different European countries and the problem of the ageing health workforce and how public authorities are dealing with these challenges. These are two of the key issues currently being dealt with in the European Social Dialogue in the Hospital Sector, in addition to issues related to occupational health and safety. In December 2010 the social partners at EU-level a Frameworks of Action “Recruitment and Retention” on behalf of their members adopted to frame and guide their work for this and the coming year. EPSU hopes that this dialogue will lead to a constructive agreement like the “medical sharps agreement”.

The outcome of the conference has been related in a Press Release here attached.



European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

Press communication – 19 October 2011

“European health workers must not be the scapegoats of the crisis. Decent work is needed to improve Europe’s health”

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) held the biggest gathering in 2011 of health workers in Europe to discuss the effects of the crisis on health and Social Services workers. EPSU is the biggest organization of workers in Europe in the health sector. About 100 people from more than 27 European countries attended the event.

The conference discussed the challenges that the crisis is putting on the different health systems of Europe. Health worker are particularly affected by the austerity measures that are being imposed across Europe, inside and outside the EU.

Issues such the Europeanisation of National Health Care Systems and Services to how health care is affected is of much concern for EPSU affiliates. To achieve better working and occupational health and safety and successful social dialogue at all levels is needed. At this stage many governments in European countries are having deaf ears to such dialogue.

European health workers are facing huge workloads, low pay and stress so there is a trend of workers leaving the profession. The retention and recruitment in the sector will be a key part of the trade union strategy to tackle existing and future staff shortages. This is specially important as in many countries health workers face an ageing population with a negative impact on the patients and the service. For such objectives Europe needs alternative and innovative sources of funding

“The FTT as an alternative for financing national health systems will be a very positive step. We hope that the EU will take the lead and use some of the money raised for funding a sustainable European health system” **Carola Fischbach-Pyttel**, General Secretary of EPSU stated.

Another major issue for the health workers in Europe is the [Cross-border mobility](#) and migration in the sector, EPSU affiliates will increase the cooperation amongst themselves to ensure that mobility is not used to push downwards wages and conditions and to ensure that professional qualifications are properly recognized and valued across Europe.

Cristina Iftimescu, vice-President of the SANITAS trade union (Romania) declared that *“in our country the health reform meant hospital closures, low wages (an average nurses wage is 300 euros and doctors earn in average 900) and the departure of thousands of health workers each year, in 2011 so far more than 16000 have already left the country. Mobility on such basis will be a disaster for Romanian people and the health of the country. This is the policy pursued by our government”*.

For information: in Romanian: Marina Irime, irimie@ping.ro ; 00 40 21 319 72 96 or 00 40 722 211 461.
In English: Pablo Sanchez, psanchez@epsu.org 00 32 474 62 66 33

EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 275 trade unions; EPSU organizes 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).

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)
45 Rue Royale - 1000 BRUSSELS – BELGIUM
Tel. : 32 2 250 10 80 * Fax : 32 2 250 10 99 * E-mail : epsu@epsu.org *
Website: <http://www.epsu.org>