



EPSU General Circular Nr 4 (2016)

EPSU Executive Committee members
All affiliated unions

Ref: JWG/cb
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ETUC Executive Committee 6 September – short update

Dear Colleagues,

The ETUC Executive Committee took place on 6 September. It discussed two issues:

- Future of Europe
- EU pillar of social rights.

On the *Future of Europe* the debate touched upon many topics. A general line of the unions is that we need a European Union that is democratic, inspires and gives a perspective of jobs, better pay and conditions. Please find attached the first discussion paper. ETUC Secretariat will revise the document based on the comments made by participations in the ETUC Executive Committee (your representatives of the Confederations, and the European Trade Union Federations).

For EPSU we commented that the ETUC vision needs to stress the important role of public services. Public services address people's basic needs, are the outcomes of (local) democratic processes and provide for solidarity and social-economic cohesion. Well-functioning quality public services are a key part of the response to xenophobia and Euroscepticism. This means a focus on the rights of people to education, health and other public services. Public investment is key to achieve this. It is important to stress this in discussions in your confederations as well. Many confederations indicated that they will need a broader debate with the affiliates on this. As regards the democratization of the EU, it is important to underline the so-called "Community method" of making legislation and policy. In this the Commission, governments and the European Parliament decide. Trade unions and employers are involved. This contrasts with the agreements the governments make between themselves (intergovernmental method) such as the Fiscal Compact.

The attached document on the *EU pillar of social rights* was broadly well received by the Executive. There will be small changes to the document but we send you the text as discussed. It will serve as the ETUC contribution in a forthcoming hearing with the European Commission. Overall the evaluation has become more positive. This discussion and consultation opens a door to obtain progress on the social dimension. But concrete measures need to be proposed. National hearings are also taking place involving the trade unions and employers.

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federation of the ETUC
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In the margin of the Executive there was also discussion on the growing opposition to *CETA*, the trade deal between the EU and Canada. See our letter of 8 September. The Members of the Executive were also informed of the position of the ETUC regarding addressing *work-life balance*. I attach the draft for your information.

In case of comments or questions please do not hesitate to let us know.

In Solidarity,



Jan Willem Goudriaan
EPSU General Secretary

Encls.

- Draft ETUC Platform on the Future of Europe (first draft for discussion)
- Working for a Better Deal for All Workers (draft position): ETUC Priorities for the current phase of the European Commission Consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights
- Annex1 to the above draft position: Draft Response to the EU Commission

For more information

- “A new Europe for people, planet and prosperity for all”, common statement by 175 European and national Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions <http://www.epsu.org/article/new-europe-people-planet-and-prosperity-all>
- the position of the 1st Euro-Mediterranean summit <http://primeminister.gr/2016/09/09/15173>