



Joint declaration of the Public Services Employers' Forum

Re-building Confidence in Europe requires Sound Public Services

The Tripartite Social Summit on 20 March 2014 will tackle the very crucial topic of “Re-building confidence in Europe: Focus on job creation – lessons learned and future orientations”. The partners of the Public Services Employers' Forum would like to reiterate their commitments and address recommendations for the needed policy developments at European level.

1- Invest in Human Capital

Recognising that the quality of human capital in an organisation is the key driver of organisational effectiveness, the PSEF recommends the following strategies and practices to both their members and relevant policy makers at all levels.

- To better monitor current and future skills needs including in public services. This should be done by public authorities, in cooperation with social partners, in the light of the comparatively older workforce in public services than in other sectors of the economy;
- To invest in career development. Public services recognise their activities to offer interesting and modern career opportunities to young people and promote the attractiveness of public services employment by undertaking different measures such as career guidance in schools.
- To support training and education. This could be done through work-based learning programmes, such as apprenticeships, and in this regard the dual system of education/training that operates in countries such as Germany has considerable merit.





2- Boost Youth Employment

In Europe, more than 5.69 million young people are unemployed. The average rate of youth unemployment (23.5%) is more than double the overall unemployment rate (10.9%). Public services, with a strengthened partnership approach (between national / regionals and locals actors), provide a key part of the solution to the current youth employment crisis.

On this important issue, the PSEF would like to put forward relevant policy makers at all levels the need:

- To undertake demographic mapping in and public services workplaces as part of an age management or workforce planning strategy, in order to help prepare for the future and avoid a 'sudden cliff';
- To undertake skills assessments and ensure lifelong learning methods in the workplace to promote active ageing and job openings for the younger generation;
- To promote flexible working options and supportive working environments as part of active ageing strategies to retain older workers and introduce a younger generation.
- To ensure that relevant monitoring and follow-up assessments form part of any youth employment strategy, as they provide support to local communities with limited resources to make informed decisions and ensure sustainability of such strategies;





3- Achieve a Sound and Well-negotiated TTIP

In July 2013, the European Union and the United States began negotiating upon the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), aiming to remove trade barriers in a wide range of sectors to increase trade in goods and services between the two parties. We call on the European Commission:

- To respect the EU Treaty Principle and EU political balance on Public Services. The TTIP mandate refers to the aim to have high quality public utilities, respecting the EU Treaty. Mirroring the special nature of public services, many previous Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) have already put in place protective measures for public services.
- To ensure the transparency of the process. Given the special nature of any negotiation process, it may be difficult to access information about its impact on European authorities and undertakings. This has been strongly criticised by stakeholders. Stakeholders should regularly be involved in the negotiation process, including social partners at all levels.
- To reject the inclusion of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions into the TTIP. An ISDS tool would bring detrimental consequences endangering European values and standards, business climate and further development of the EU. The use of an ISDS tool would allow big companies on both sides of the Atlantic to circumvent national legal systems, in too commercial-oriented tribunals.

Partners of the Public Services Employers' Forum would like to highlight that Services of General Interest are at the heart of competitiveness and growth for Europe and are key for Europe's sound economic and social recovery.





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The Public Services Employers' Forum is an informal forum of European employer organisations cooperating on matters of joint interest. Signatories of this joint declaration are: CEEP, CER, CEMR, EFEE, EURELECTRIC, HOSPEEM and UITP.

