

Challenging consensus on market-based solutions to fight climate breakdown

The role of public services in the EU Industrial Strategy and Circular Economy Action Plan

EUROPEAN PUBLIC SERVICE UNION

EPSU in a nutshell

- **8** million public service workers in **269** trade unions: EU, Russia, central Asia, Turkey
- EPSU is one of the **European Trade Union Federations** (Industrial Europe, ETF, EFBBW, UNI-Europa, EFFAT, etc.)
- **ETUC** largest federation and European region of **Public Services International**
- **4 sectors**: Health & social services, Local & regional governments, National & European administrations, Utilities (energy, waste, water) + company policy
- Secretariat: based in **Brussels** (20 staff)

EPSU and the Green Deal

To address the climate emergency at the level which is so urgently needed, EPSU calls upon the European institutions to include the following in the European Green Deal:

- **A significant increase in public investment**
- **The promotion of public ownership of utilities**
- **An ambitious Just Transition strategy for workers and local communities**
- **Access to water and energy are rights!**

EU Industrial Strategy

- The aim of the Industrial Strategy is to decarbonise energy intensive industries and incentivise the industry to become green.
- The intention is to further develop new markets for climate neutral and circular products. The Industrial Strategy will therefore be based on the circular economy.
- The future industrial policy of the EU will only be successful if it includes the quality of public services, and issues of fairness and transparency as central components.
- The EU must use all its instruments to ensure that the industrial base of Europe continues to develop. Industries create jobs and ensure innovation, and should be protected against unfair competition, and third countries which do not respect a level-playing field. Ultimately, unfair competition undermines social and environmental standards, and will hinder the realisation of the EU's climate goals.

EPSU stresses four ways in which public sector must be taken into account in the Industrial Strategy:

- There is a need for quality public administrations, such as ministries, environmental protection agencies, labour inspectorates and public employment services.
- The public sector is a key economic actor in its own right.
- The industry benefits from quality public services such as childcare, which enables fathers and mothers of young children to continue working, as well as public elderly care services which provide much needed support to workers and their families.
- The EU's Industrial Policy should ensure public funding is subject to social and environmental conditionality

EU Circular Economy Action Plan

- The Commission emphasised that for the Green Deal to be successful, there must be a shift from a linear to circular economy, based on the principles of reuse, reduce, recycle
- The Circular Economy Action Plan will help boost the development of climate-neutral and circular products in the EU and beyond. It will assist in the fight against climate-change and will help the EU reach carbon-neutrality.
- EPSU supports the circular economy strategy as it will increase sustainability and will contribute to job creation. Establishing a circular economy through waste reduction, reuse, repair and recycling is a necessity in a world of rising consumption and finite resources. The circular economy will be key to achieving the targets outlined in the COP 21 agreement

EPSU emphasises five key points which must be considered in the Circular Economy Strategy:

- Labour market, worker's rights and involvement of trade unions
- New green skills and green jobs
- Health and safety of workers
- Quality of jobs, good working conditions and decent pay
- Support for public services and municipalities in transition to a circular economy

Conclusion

Integrating a public sector dimension in the EU's Industrial Strategy and Circular economy action plan will be essential to mitigate climate breakdown and to adapt to its unavoidable consequences on our societies

Public services are not a cost to society but an investment in our communities

Thanks for your attention

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