



EPSU Congress Resolution – June 2024

High-quality, affordable and accessible public services are an essential pillar of a social Europe

The European Council 27-28 June 2024 will discuss the Strategic Agenda of the European Union (EU) for 2024-2029, laying the ground for future priorities. We demand that it recognises the importance of public services/services of general interest within the EU and in the EU's enlargement, trade, development and external policies.

In recent years, the EU and neighboring countries have been facing an unprecedented series of crises and challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapidly unfolding climate crisis and environmental degradation, or the repercussions of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Public services and SGIs have proven to be an essential pillar of the European social model and of a social market economy. They contribute to long-term economic development in all sectors, to social protection and social cohesion and to our security. They enhance the capacity of individuals to enjoy their fundamental rights and freedom to participate fully in social, economic and political life.

Investing in public services is therefore essential. The EU's future fiscal policy must secure social and public investment and allow Member States the fiscal space to safeguard their social protection systems and public service obligations, as well maintain their capacity for new investment in social infrastructure. We reject the programmed and coordinated austerity policies of the new economic governance guidelines

Ambitious European public initiatives must be considered in key areas such as health and social care, education, water and sanitation, energy, mobility and public transport, housing, banking, culture and media, digital accessibility, and public administration.

To realise these initiatives, Europe needs an ambitious Agenda for public services, with a structured approach to developing public services, supported by appropriate legislation, guaranteed public funding and constant investment. We expect the Commission's upcoming work programme to reflect this.

While we have reservations about certain elements of the Letta Report, **EPSU welcomes the recommendation for an Action Plan for High Quality Services of General Interest and calls for the EU Strategic Agenda to include it.**

More specifically EPSU:

- Demands that high-quality, affordable and accessible public services are at the forefront of the next legislative term and integrated in the Strategic Agenda for 2024-2029, in the debates on Industrial policy, the Social and Green Deal and on beyond Growth, and in EU policy-making in general;
- Considers that a European Action Plan on high quality SGI/public services should reaffirm, in accordance with article [14 TFEU](#), [Protocol No. 26 on SGIs](#) (TFEU) and [Article 36](#) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, the right and freedom of access of all EU citizens and workers and their families to high-quality public services/SGIs, which are affordable, adaptable to technological and societal developments, and which promote social and territorial cohesion;
- Demands the full involvement of the social partners in developing and implementing the Action Plan at horizontal and sectoral level through social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels;
- Invites the future president of the European Commission to appoint inside the next College a Commissioner to be in charge of developing the Action Plan on SGI/public services; and
- Requests that the European Parliament be given the task of monitoring and evaluating the evolution of the quality and affordability of public services both horizontally and in the different sectors.