

# Itinerariul Dialog

București, 27.02.2013

*Proiect finanțat de Norvegia prin Mecanismul Financiar Norvegian 2009-2014,  
în cadrul Programului Muncă Decentă și Dialog Tripartit*

*EPSU presentation*

- *Broader EU context of austerity*
- *Social dialogue at EU and national levels*

## EPSU-Who are we?

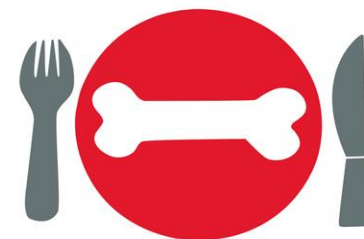
- ✓ 8 million members (68% of women), 250 trade unions from 49 European countries
- ✓ ETUC (largest) federation and European region of PSI
- ✓ EU social partner status , leads trade union side in 5 EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees
  - Local and regional government
  - National and EU administrations (including **prison services**)
  - Gas
  - Electricity
  - Hospitals
- ✓ Campaigning and negotiating to improve quality and availability of public services based on good working conditions, social dialogue, and sustainable funding

## EPSU Prison services network

- ✓ network of EPSU members - webpage <http://www.epsu.org/r/315>
- ✓ Meeting at least 1 per year
- ✓ EPSU committee for national and EU administration & Executive Committee
- ✓ Limited competence of European Commission- Home and justice affairs but application of EU social standards and EU social dialogue committee in central government administrations
- ✓ Council of Europe's Prison Rules: triangle: management, prisoners and staff
- ✓ EPSU network : **Exchanging 'good practices', pursuing common objectives**
  - Organising prison staff
  - Defending quality of working conditions and of detention conditions
  - Opposing privatisation
  - Linking prison unions with the wider trade union movement
- ✓ Key positions to date:
  - EPSU action plan, 2006
  - Prison action day against overcrowding, February 2008
  - Response to Commission Green Paper, December 2011
  - Council of Europe staff Code of conduct , September 2011
  - Statement to EU Justice Ministers, « Austerity is like salt on an open wound, April 2012



- ✓ Socially unfair
- ✓ Economically unsound
- ✓ Undemocratic
- ✓ In many instances, anti-trade union & social dialogue –violations of International and EU standards
- ✓ IMF says now it didn't get it right
- ✓ Support of the ILO
- ✓ EPSU alternatives Economic governance



**NON  
à l'austérité**



## EU obligations on public services and fundamental human rights

- ✓ Article 9 states “in defining policies and activities the Union shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of high level of employment, the adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health”.
- ✓ Articles 152-155: Social dialogue at all levels : information, consultation, negotiations
- ✓ Public Services Protocole on public services calls for a “high level of quality, safety and affordability, equal treatment and the promotion of universal access and of user rights.” Article 14 provides legal basis.
- ✓ Charter of Fundamental Rights includes trade union rights and access to public services, right to a good administration, gender equality
- ✓ EU social standards: working time, health and safety, information and consultation rights of workers, part-time, fixed-term contracts, gender equality; non discrimination at work



www.loremipsum.org

# EPSU tax justice Campaign

- ✓ Key alternative to public spending cuts
- ✓ tax justice demands – Robin Hood tax or Tax on financial transactions– 11 EU governments in favour (not Romania) that can raise Euros 30-35 Billion, common corporate tax, common principles of progressive taxation
- ✓ EPSU Campaign against tax fraud “*We want it back: missing € 1 trillion in the EU every year*”
- ✓ Focus on employees collecting tax, impact on austerity that facilitates tax dodging, EPSU research finds job cuts in tax services in 24 out of EU-27 and Norway

## European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) on water

[www.right2water.eu](http://www.right2water.eu)



- ✓ Implementation of the right to water and sanitation
- ✓ Keep water out of the internal market (no marketisation)- EC recommendations to privatise water to Portugal and Greece. Also debate on concessions and procurement
- ✓ Set rules/regulation to ensure access to water, sanitation for all
- ✓ 1 million signatures by mid 2013! **Romania target of 24 750 signatures – 1400 signatures so far**

## EU social dialogue

- ✓ Legal basis in EU treaties – Obligation to consult trade unions on social policy
- ✓ Information, consultation and negotiations
- ✓ Tripartite and bipartite, cross-sectoral and sectoral
- ✓ 44 sectoral social dialogue committees
- ✓ Social dialogue committee in central government administrations established in December 2010
- ✓ EPSU-led TUNED in EU-26 + Norway
- ✓ Employers side: EUPAE 10 employers including Romania
- ✓ Covers prison services



## EU Social Dialogue Committee in

### central government administrations

#### 2 main outcomes in 2012:

##### Joint response on EC consultation on restructuring

- ✓ Recognise that job and wage cuts are imposed rather than negotiated with the unions except Ireland and Lithuania (in Ireland, after the latest round of cuts) after trade union protests, partial agreements in Estonia, Croatia
- ✓ Social dialogue maintained in countries not hit or less hit by the crisis with negotiated pay increases at or around inflation e.g. Sweden, Finland, Austria, DK, Norway
- ✓ Recognises that fiscal consolidation IS restructuring =rights
- ✓ Joint trade union/employers call upon government to reintroduce trade union rights and support a better EU legal framework on restructuring in public and private sectors

##### Framework Agreement for a Quality administration:

- ✓ public services values and trade union rights
- ✓ A good administration requires an effective social dialogue, resources and citizens-users involvement Potentially useful for prison services



# Trends/problems in prisons

- ✓ 2012, Eurostat and Council of Europe, EPSU statement April 2012
  - Prison population at 630 000, 24% increase of prisoner rate per 100 000 inhabitants past decade
  - overcrowding in 13 EU countries KEY problem for both trade unions and prison directors (and prisoners)
    - increase of sentencing length: Average length 8.6 months, for 18 countries average increase is 85%, only 2 show a decrease (Switzerland; Northern Ireland)
    - Pre-trial detainees: EU average 21.9%; foreign nationals: 18.2%
  - Violence, health and safety issues, lack of political support
  - Understaffing across all services dealing with offenders
  - Inadequate training of staff AND management
  - Since crisis: increasing use of overtime, strike in Greece, Belgium

## Common demands, some shared by Directors of prisons

- Positive trend: high trade union density
- Training, basic and vocational, also handling and reduction of violence between prisoners
- Pay, at least above inflation, in line with private sector
- better cooperation with civil society and preparation for release
- More support from governments and politicians
- Special attention/treatment Juveniles; Foreign nationals (learning home language, access to interpreters ); drug users
- Individual cell
- Numerus clausus: to fix a maximum capacity for each prison
- ✓ Alternatives to imprisonment which is a last resort punishment
  - ✓ Electronic monitoring, Conditional release with sufficient probation staff
  - ✓ Cooperation between all public services

Council of Europe and EU fail to mention importance of social dialogue...Instead code of ethics for staff, see EPSU comments

- ✓ Yet social dialogue is central to both improving working conditions and detention conditions
- ✓ Before the crisis, trade union rights of prison officers not respected everywhere but progress e.g. training of prison officers in Belgium
- ✓ Post crisis: very polarised situation
- ✓ violations of ILO standards
- ✓ Social dialogue maintained but limited scope
- ✓ Social dialogue maintained despite the crisis: Nordic unions, Austria, NL, Belgium



# Conclusions

- Using and increasing union density in prison services
- Autonomy and independence of trade unions
- Takes 2 to tango, employers must assume their responsibilities
- Not losing sight of key demands: pay , health and safety, training
- Legal framework: problem for instance in the UK, good in Norway
- Keeping a confederal approach: Cooperation with other trade unions to argue for broader demands e,g, Budget, investing in prevention, education, jobs
- Cooperation with civil society