



**European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)  
European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM)**

Press Communication: Brussels  
Immediate release, 9 March 2006

**EPSU / HOSPEEM Calling Notice for Press Conference 17 March 2006  
Attention: news editors**

**Subject:** Launch of European social partners committee for Hospital sector  
in European Union  
**Venue:** *International Trade Union House (ITUH)*  
*Blvd de Roi Albert II 5*  
**Brussels 1210**  
*(Located near ROGIER metro station)*

**Date and Time:** 17 March 2006 at 10.00 am

*(Brussels, 9 March 2006)*

**Event:** The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM) will jointly announce the creation of a European Sectoral social dialogue committee for the hospital sector. A press conference will be held in the above venue.

**Participants:** The press conference will take place parallel to a conference on social dialogue in the hospital sector. **Therefore representatives from hospital trade union and employers' associations from throughout the EU will be available for bilateral questions.**

**Background:** The hospital sector is one of the most sensitive and strategically important sectors. In a European Union context this is particularly the case, as there is increasing ambiguity as to how much the hospital sector is influenced by EU policy, while officially remaining strictly a Member State concern.

The establishment of the committee represents the first occasion that there will be formal recognition of social partners in the hospital sector at the European level. This is an *extremely significant step* as it allows the workers and employers to have a direct formal input on EU policies affecting the hospital sector.

Over the last 5 years, as the social partners for the hospital sector at European level, EPSU and HOSPEEM have been working, with European Commission support, to formalise sectoral social dialogue at the European level. The successful agreement to establish a committee marks the end of the 'informal stage' and the beginning of genuine social partner engagement at the European level for the sector.

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The social partners have agreed a work programme for 2006-2007 that will concentrate on;

- Recruitment and retention of personnel in the hospital sector;
- The age profile of the hospital workforce;
- The new skill requirements for the workforce in the sector.

Related topics:

- Hospital sector and EU policy, including freedom of movement issues;
- Recognition of qualifications of medical personnel;
- The Services Directive and the exclusion of healthcare from the directive.

### **Practical details**

If you want to arrange interviews with EPSU or HOSPEEM leadership or with delegations from one of the countries, please call EPSU press officer **Brian Synnott**,  
**+ 0474 98 96 75**.

**For information please contact Tamara Goosens or Brian Synnott, + 32 2 2501080 or send an email to [epsu@epsu.org](mailto:epsu@epsu.org)**

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***EPSU** is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC. 8 million public service workers and their 213 trade unions are members. They organise workers in health and social services, local and national administration, energy, water, waste.*

*In the health and social services sector EPSU organises 3.5 million members*

***HOSPEEM** is the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association. It regroups at European level national employers' associations operating in the hospital and health care sector and delivering services of general interest, in order to co-ordinate their views and actions with regard to a sector and a market in constant evolution.*

*HOSPEEM is an individual member of CEEP.*