

**European Sectoral Social Dialogue in the Hospital Sector
HOSPEEM-EPSU Joint Work Programme 2014-2016**

Adopted at SSDC HS - 6 March 2014

1. Introduction:

Setting the scene:

Healthcare is one of the most significant sectors in the EU economy employing directly around one in every ten workers in the EU. The healthcare and hospital sector is also one of the sectors with the greatest potential for job creation in Europe¹ due to different factors, not least the increasing demand for healthcare services due to demographic change.

However, the sector faces major challenges that are multifaceted and complex and that stem from the combined effect of different factors, in particular:

- the health workforce itself is ageing with insufficient new recruits to replace those that are retiring,
- problems of retention due to demanding working conditions, limited career opportunities and non competitive remuneration in some health occupations in a number of countries,
- demand for new or regularly updated skills and competences due to an increased use of new technologies and new care patterns to cope with chronic conditions of a growing number elderly and,
- patients expecting and demanding higher quality service, more involvement in decision making about the health services that they get and a greater emphasis on preventative care.

These factors need to be matched with the pressure put on healthcare budgets stemming from the deep Europe-wide economic crisis faced by Members States, with a direct impact on the health systems, the health workforce and availability of health service.

¹ In 2010 there were around 17, 1 million jobs in the healthcare sector which accounted for 8% of all jobs in the EU-27. Data from Eurostat (2011) NACE Rev.2 categories 86 & 87

In this setting, the healthcare systems are under strain to find innovative solutions both in technology and processes, implement a more cost effective management to provide high quality healthcare, and undertake reforms in the way in which healthcare systems are organised.

Furthermore, the 2014 European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life will constitute a good opportunity for social partners to focus on innovative solutions that can help balance the demands from both professional and private setting of healthcare staff.

Our approach/role:

Aware of these challenges, HOSPEEM and EPSU are committed to contribute to tackle the problems affecting the health sector, in particular in view of the extent to which they affect the health workforce, by making active and effective use of the Social Dialogue through:

- agreeing within the HOSPEEM-EPSU sectoral social dialogue committee for the hospital sector on actions and agreements, making use of the instruments negotiated² and building upon the concrete work done so far;
- cooperating with the European institutions and contributing to EU policy making through a bottom-up approach, by which we aim to feed European policies with the practical knowledge of employers and employees³;
- influencing and shaping European debates on employment issues in the healthcare sector.

As European Sectoral Social Partners, HOSPEEM and EPSU are engaged in a wide range of activities and committed to make of this work programme 2013/14-2015 a key pillar of their joint agenda. It will constitute the framework in which the upcoming activities of the Sectoral European Social Dialogue for the healthcare and hospital sector will be developed and shaped. This work-programme has to be considered as a living document identifying the major areas of cooperation on which we intend to work together in the coming years. Nevertheless HOSPEEM and EPSU may decide to update it in the light of developments regarding relevant policy initiatives at EU level or projects that HOSPEEM and EPSU may engage in.

The deliverables produced within the framework of Social Dialogue can take different formats (report; documentation from seminar/technical workshop/conference; guidelines; recommendations; common declaration; framework of actions; framework agreement; etc.) in the context of different types of activities, such as exchange of experience and good practice; seminar/technical workshop/conference; project; negotiations.⁴

² Ex: HOSPEEM-EPSU Framework of Actions on Recruitment and Retention, 17 December 2010.

³ HOSPEEM and EPSU are currently involved in the Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce and the Joint Action on European Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting with the status of “collaborating partners”.

⁴ Communication from the Commission, Partnership for change in an enlarged Europe - Enhancing the contribution of European social dialogue (Annex 2), COM(2004) 557 final, 12 August 2004.

2. Our priorities

2.1 Priority areas:

- **Occupational health and safety**
- **Recruitment and retention of healthcare workforce**

2.2 Transversal priorities:

The planned activities and projects laid down in this document will be constantly complemented by the following transversal priorities which have guided the joint work of HOSPEEM and EPSU so far:

- Enhancing the impact of the activities undertaken in the context of the sectoral social dialogue committee for the hospital sector.
- Building up and strengthening the capacity of social partners in the sector across all Member States.
- Promoting an exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of healthcare, social and employment policy between social partners' organisations and their representatives. This comprises also maintaining an active working relationship with the relevant cross-sectoral social partners and complementing their work where suitable.
- Influencing policies at EU level by the monitoring and involvement in European consultations and legislative processes, both pro-active and re-active, where these would have an impact on the hospital sector, its financing, organisation, regulation and workforce, if appropriate and agreed.

Annex 1: Outcomes of the work programme 2011-2013

Joint HOSPEEM-EPSU Work Programme 2014-2016

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	OBJECTIVES	TIMELINE	DELIVERABLES*
Occupational health and safety	Follow-up to the project “Promotion and Support of Implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU on the prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and health care sector“	Monitor the transposition and impact that Directive 2010/32/EU has on hospital staff in each member states.	By the end of 2014	Yearly update on the implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU – for HOSPEEM and EPSU members and to be shared with the EC, if appropriate.
			By the end of 2015	Mid-term evaluation (report) – for HOSPEEM and EPSU members and to be shared with the EC, if appropriate.
	Active and healthy ageing	Outline effective age management strategies, give guidance on key issues and give examples of existing good practice from across the European Union to keep staff productive and healthy	By the end of 2013	Finalisation of Guidelines to address the challenges of an ageing workforce and mapping of good practice. <i>N.B.: Guidelines and examples of good practice were signed at the PM 2013 SSDC HS on 11.12.13</i>
	Third-party violence and harassment at work	Monitor how the third-party violence agreement is followed-up and implemented by HOSPEEM members and EPSU affiliates and consider healthcare specific issues, also based on the Joint Implementation Report.	By the end of 2013	Joint Implementation Report on the follow-up and implementation of the multi-sectoral guidelines to tackle work-related third-party violence. <i>N.B.: The report was adopted at the PM 2013 SSDC HS on 11.12.13</i>
Occupational health and safety issues with regard to patient safety and the quality of services		Provide policy momentum for a new EU health and safety in the workplace strategy, with particular focus on the challenges facing healthcare workers and the healthcare sector.	By early 2014	Joint statement of HOSPEEM and EPSU on the new EU Occupational Safety and Health Policy Framework and follow-up to it. <i>N.B.: The joint statement was adopted at the PM 2013 SSDC HS on 11.12.13</i>

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	Identify how actions on occupational health and wellbeing contribute to improved health as well as retention within the healthcare sector	Keep staff both physically and mentally fit in their roles.	2014-2015	1) Identification of existing guidance/good practice by HOSPEEM members and EPSU affiliates on occupational health and safety concerning the topics tackling “psychosocial risks and stress at work” ⁵ and “musculoskeletal disorders” ⁶ ; 2) Organisation of a technical seminar for the exchange of best practice i.e. regarding measures and risk assessment. On the basis of the outcomes resulting from it, evaluation of most effective follow-up and action in the context of this joint work-programme.
Recruitment and retention of healthcare workforce	Migration of healthcare workers within the EU	Develop concrete action to tackle staff shortages and qualification needs now and in the future.	2014	Joint HOSPEEM-EPSU inputs to influence the scope of the EC Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce and the Joint Action on European Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting (in particular by feeding joint contributions into Work Packages 4 and 6 of the Joint Action).
	Shortage of healthcare professionals/workers		2014-2015	Context: DG SANCO commissioned research and study on Effective Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Health Workers 1) Inputs from HOSPEEM and EPSU and their members on recruitment and retention practice and workforce planning
	Follow-up to the Code of Conduct on Ethical Recruitment and Retention (2008) and to Framework of Actions (2010) ⁷			

⁵ See EU-OSHA terminology: <https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/stress>

⁶ See EU-OSHA terminology: <https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/msds>

⁷ On this subject, HOSPEEM and EPSU will put a particular attention on cooperating with the World Health Organisation (WHO) with the aim of promoting the use of both the HOSPEEM-EPSU Code of Conduct on Ethical Recruitment and Retention (2008) and the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (2010).

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				<p>strategies.</p> <p>2) Involvement in drafting and assessing the criteria for success that will be produced to assess the effectiveness of the above practice and strategies.</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>Follow-up report on the use and implementation of the HOSPEEM-EPSU Framework of Actions on Recruitment and Retention (2010): Collating case studies/ model initiatives on issues mentioned in chapter 3 of the EPSU-HOSPEEM Framework of Actions "Recruitment and Retention", thereby feeding into the study mentioned above.</p>
	<p>Stating the importance of the role that Life-long Learning (LLL)/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) play in recruiting and retaining staff</p>	<p>Promote life-long learning (LLL)/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all healthcare staff by stimulating the creation of a learning environment in healthcare institutions both through formal and on-the-job training with the aim to improve and guarantee the quality of service. The precondition for this is a mutual commitment: for employers to ensure access to LLL/CPD to all healthcare staff and for health workers to actively engage in it.</p>	<p>2014-2015</p>	<p>Elaboration of a Common Statement on the importance of ensuring access to life-long learning (LLL)/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all healthcare staff with the aim of improving the quality of service.</p> <p>This activity is intended to also support the implementation of the revised Professional Qualifications Directive.</p>

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	<p>Employment and retention of younger workers: The health care sector is an economic sector with potential for future employment growth. A lot is being invested into the training of healthcare professionals and workers. In some countries, the current situation of public budgets often makes it problematic to offer good employment and career prospects. Younger health professionals/workers in several EU Member States are facing the risk of getting unemployed.</p>	<p>Identify the role that the social partners in the healthcare sector can play, through EU initiatives or own activities, to provide solutions to the challenge of attracting and retaining young (well-trained) healthcare professionals and workers in their jobs.</p>	<p>2014-2016</p>	<p>Follow-up to the Framework of Actions on Youth Employment signed by cross-sectoral social partners by identifying specific sectoral role and exchanging and collecting good practice on national initiatives aimed at creating opportunities to tackle youth unemployment in the healthcare sector.</p> <p>Contribute to the implementation of the objectives and actions of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships.</p>

**Annex 1: European Sectoral Social Dialogue in the Hospital Sector
Overview of outcomes of the work programme 2011-2013**

The large majority of the thematic priorities agreed for the EPSU-HOSPEEM Work Programme 2011-2013 and of the projects listed there have been tackled and finalised between early 2011 and mid 2013. The two priorities that have not been directly covered are "Well-being of workforce" and "Diversity of workforce", even though some of the actions/activities carried out partially deal with it.

Thematic Priority	Activity	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
Qualifications and skills	Exchange on priority issues and objectives for revision of Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications 2005/36/EC and explore the possibility of joint HOSPEEM-EPSU contribution to the consultation	Year: 2011 Months: 01-07	Regular update and discussion on priority issues and objectives for the revision of Directive 2005/36/EC within the HOSPEEM-EPSU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee	2011 → 2013
			HOSPEEM-EPSU Contribution to public consultation on the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC)	14-03-2011
			HOSPEEM-EPSU Response to the European Commission's Green Paper on reviewing the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications 2005/36/EC	20-09-2011
			HOSPEEM-EPSU Joint response on the proposal for a directive on the modernisation of the Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications	15-06-2012
	Collect and exchange good practice concerning the identification of skill needs (also related to technology/ICT/eHealth) and measures to address them; to be carried on		HOSPEEM-EPSU Joint participation in "Feasibility study on the establishment of a EU Sector Council on Employment & Skills for Nursing & Care Workforce" Presentation and discussion of project and work progress in three meetings of the SSDC HS in 2012	12-2011 → 12-2012

Thematic Priority	Activity	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
	through 2011 and early 2012		Elaboration of criteria to assess deliverables and outcome of project, presented at SSDC HS of 10 December 2012	
Ageing workforce and Well-being of workforce	Update of existing material (case studies and good practice and produce booklet)	Year: 2011 Months: 07-12	Technical Seminar “Managing the ageing workforce: challenges, opportunities and experiences”	27-04-2012
	Elaborate a HOSPEEM- EPSU agreement on the ageing health care work force; to be started in 2011 and continued in 2012		Negotiations on “EPSU-HOSPEEM Guidelines and examples of good practice to address the challenges of an ageing workforce” and monitoring of EU initiatives on skills development and forecasting	12-2011 → 2013
	Identify effective solutions that exist and have been or are currently negotiated and jointly developed by social partners			
Diversity of workforce	Collect and exchange good practice and assess policies and instruments	Year: 2012 Months: 07-12	-----	-----

Follow up to documents adopted and implementation of agreements concluded between HOSPEEM and EPSU in the period 2008 to 2010:

Document	Activity/Deliverable	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-border Recruitment and Retention (2008)	Collect information on follow-up and implementation by social partners to prepare assessment agreed upon for 2012	Year: 2011 Months: 07-12	Joint final report on the use and implementation of the EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-Border Recruitment and Retention in the Hospital Sector	05-09-2012

Document	Activity/Deliverable	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
	Explore to commission a study to map migration flows as well as opportunities and challenges for migrant workers, local health care workforce and health care systems in receiving and sending countries; focus is on putting together, re-analysing and updating existing material; could comprise enquiry to affiliates	Year: 2011/2012 Months: 07-11/07-12	Participation in EC Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce (participation in stakeholders working group meetings, regular contacts with DG SANCO, involvement of DG SANCO representatives in HOSPEEM-EPSU sectoral social dialogue working group meetings)	09-2012 →
			Participation in Work-package 4 and 6 of Joint Action on European Health Workforce (HOSPEEM and EPSU are collaborating partners in this project, participation in stakeholders working group meetings, regular contact with DG SANCO, involvement of DG SANCO representative in HOSPEEM-EPSU sectoral social dialogue working group meetings)	09-2012 →
			Participation of DG SANCO in HOSPEEM-EPSU sectoral social dialogue working group meetings and exchange that resulted into the publication of the call for tenders "Study on Effective Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Health Workers". According to the call for proposals, the study should be carried out in close cooperation with HOSPEEM and EPSU.	Call for tenders published in April 2013. Work to be done in 2013/2014
Framework Agreement (2009) and Directive 2010/32/EU on the prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and health care sector (2010)	Explore possibilities of setting up a project to organise a series of seminars in the sector during 2012, co-financed by DG EMPL (lead: EPSU)	Year: 2011/2012 Months: 07-11/07-12	HOSPEEM-EPSU Joint project "Promotion and Support of Implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU on the prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector"	10-2012 → 09-2013
Multi Sector Guidelines to tackle third party violence	Participation in and contribution to series of seminars	Year: 2011 Months: 07-12	Multi-sectoral project on the Implementation of the multi-sectoral guidance on third party violence and harassment related to work	2011

Document	Activity/Deliverable	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
and harassment related to work (2010)			Gathering of information and drafting of DRAFT Report on the follow-up and implementation, based on a questionnaire addressed to EPSU and HOSPEEM affiliates (currently coordinated amongst the signatory parties; expected for 10/2013, to be discussed at the SSDC HS of 11 December 2013)	05-10/2013

Additional issues not included in the work programme:

Document	Activity/Deliverable	Planned timeline	Outcome	Actual timeline
Workforce Planning and Forecasting		-----	Joint Statement of HOSPEEM and EPSU on the Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce	05/09/2012