

Resolution Nr. 2 adopted at the EPP Congress, Rotterdam (The Netherlands),
31st May – 1st June 2022

Priorities for a post-crises EU

The COVID-19 pandemic changed our world for good. For two years the virus paralysed our economy and our society. Now that the worst is behind us, we are faced with a new crisis: the war in Ukraine. Both crises have had or are having a big impact on companies and workers throughout the EU. The EUCDW calls upon the EPP to take the lead in taking the necessary measures to mitigate the impact of both crises and to prepare our society and our economy for future challenges.

More concretely, we ask the EPP and its MEPs to focus on two topics in the months to come: guaranteeing workers' participation and democracy at work and developing a new care strategy.

The European SURE instrument to finance Member States' short-term work schemes has proven highly efficient, especially during the first and second waves of the pandemic. Thousands of jobs were saved thanks to this instrument, and the shock to the labour market was less severe than expected.

Now that companies face problems with their supply chains due to the sanctions taken against Russia for its war against Ukraine and are confronted with high energy prices, the SURE mechanism could prove an effective way to address the consequences of the war on the economy and employment.

Increase workers' participation and democracy at work

Despite the success of SURE, however, major restructurings due to the pandemic and to the Ukraine crisis cannot be ruled out. It is of the utmost importance that workers be able to have their say when it comes to the restructuring of a company. The consultation of, and participation by, workers as well as of — and by — the European Works Councils should be strengthened.

As the European People's Party, we subscribe to the right to, and the importance of, social dialogue. The right to association for workers must be guaranteed. We cannot support

regimes which do not recognise this basic social right. Furthermore, Russia's aggression against Ukraine cannot be used to justify a deregulation agenda against workers' rights and social protections.

We call on the EU to protect Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war and seeking employment in the EU. They must be integrated in our labour market and guaranteed full equal treatment in the workplace and in society. Measures must be taken to prevent any form of exploitation and discrimination. The refugee crisis and the high energy prices we are facing due to Russia's aggression have increased the risk of social dumping. This must be avoided at all costs.

A new care strategy

The pandemic has revealed some fundamental problems in the care sector. During the pandemic, healthcare professionals have been on the frontline. It is of vital importance that Member States have sufficient, well-educated and well-valued healthcare professionals: to make sure the EU is prepared for future health emergencies.

As the EPP's workers association, we stress the importance of improving conditions both for carers and for those being taken care of. More helping hands at the bedside are essential if we want to ensure essential health care.

The pandemic has been a wake-up call. It has shown the need for joint action at EU level, despite the fact that health is not an EU competence. The health and care sectors transcend national interests.

A European approach would be beneficial for all, as the sector is highly mobile, with many workers coming from different European Member States or from third countries. The EPP Group in the European Parliament has set up a holistic European Care Strategy which has been picked up by the European Commission, who will later this year present a Communication and a Council recommendation.

Furthermore, we must avoid future shortages of critical medical products and protective equipment. The EU should provide incentives to relocate production from outside the EU borders, to diversify production and to create larger stockpiles of medication and protective equipment.

Finally, we call on the EPP to consider a common medicines policy: what medicines are we offering our citizens? would it not be better to purchase these at European level?