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Onderwerp: ETUC takes note that the Directive on cross-border healthcare has been adopted by the European Parliament



European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
 Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

ETUC NOTES ADOPTION OF THE DIRECTIVE ON CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE BY EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

20 January 2011

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) notes adoption of the directive on cross-border healthcare by European Parliament. This directive spells out the rights of patients who would like to receive care outside their country. The trade union movement welcomes the improvements made to this directive thanks to discussions and following its interventions.

These improvements concern in particular:

- The social and sanitary dimension of healthcare, particularly by complementing the legal basis of this directive, initially based solely on Article 114 relating to the internal market, with Article 168 relating to public health;
- Patient safety and the guarantee that the reimbursement of healthcare costs incurred in another Member State shall be at the same level as that in their home country;
- The recognition of the responsibility of Member States for the organisation, financing and development of their health system and the regulation of patient flows.

This directive does not solve all the problems, however; it does not address the requirement of Member States to improve their national systems so as to meet constantly growing needs in this field, or healthcare relating to the consequences of ageing, as well as access for all to quality community-based healthcare systems.

"We will be very vigilant to ensure that this possibility offered to patients to be treated outside their borders is not used as an alibi nor as a pretext for Member States not to proceed with the necessary reforms of the national healthcare systems, based on solidarity," declared Josef Niemiec, ETUC confederal secretary.

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 83 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations.

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