



## **ESF Malmö 2008, September 21<sup>st</sup>: Hands off our common welfare!**

Following the Athens statement at the ESF 2006 that has seen the creation of the European Network for Public Services, **We, citizens, members of trade unions, non governmental organisations and local authorities gathered in the fifth European Social Forum in Malmö, declare:**

- We observe that European policies carry on attacking common welfare and public services through liberalisation and privatisation, creating more precariousness and unfairness within EU and in candidate countries. These policies undermine democracy, denying the rights of the citizens to participate and control public services. We denounce the corporate driven agenda of EU which benefits to trans-national companies instead of general interest. The crisis currently sweeping over the world is showing, more than ever, the dire consequences of neoliberal policies.
- This offensive on public services shows its ineffectiveness for the users, including migrants: Prices are going up, quality and access are going down. Territorial and social inequalities are deepened. Furthermore, workers' labour rights are threatened as they are considered as barriers to competition.
- We denounce the position of the European Commission and national governments which stalled on adopting a framework directive in spite of a large mobilisation gathering trade unions, political parties and citizens.
- In spite of the failure of the Doha round and GATS negotiations in the WTO, the European Union goes on exporting its neoliberal views under the "Global Europe" strategy which is a threat for non EU countries, as it creates unfair trade "partnerships" via bilateral trade agreements. This strategy also affects European citizens by furthering deregulation and undermining social rights within the EU.
- Facing the climate crisis emergency, the extension of public services should be a tool to link the struggles for a public control on services with the struggles of environmental movements. Public services are an efficient means to control the use of natural resources, energy at the first place. For these reasons the mobilisations on climate change in December 2009 in Copenhagen give us the opportunity to build bridges and new alliances between trade unions, NGOs, associations and people promoting new strategies.

**We are convinced that a large coalition is possible between trade unions, NGO's, political parties and citizens' organisations in every country and on a European level. Democratizing public services is a corner stone of an inclusive European Social Model.**

**For these reasons:**

- **We call for a mobilisation on the common welfare issue, to coordinate our struggles at the European level, specifically addressing the European institutions.**
- **We propose to organize an event before the European elections, bringing up the common welfare at the core of the debate on social Europe. We take the commitment to challenge the platforms of the candidates to European Parliament on common welfare by all means, including a questionnaire.**
- **We support and promote information campaigns to defend, improve and democratize public services, bringing an assessment about the inefficiency of privatisation policies regarding prices and quality of services as well as employment.**
- **We support the local and global struggles against privatisation and its effects. Today we support the struggles for their dignity of the workers of Alitalia and express our solidarity to the workers of Olympic Airlines. We also salute the campaign of Leipzig's citizens to defend their public services by asking for a referendum.**