



**Young European Socialists asbl**

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**YES Bureau meeting  
hosted by LSDYU Lithuania  
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**LIBERALISATION AND PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN EUROPE: THE END OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE STATE**

Public services have been developed in European countries over the last centuries. If the definition of what a public service can vary from one country to another, there are similarities between the European member states, where public services are services owned by the state and benefiting to a large part of European citizens. It can cover mobility (bus, train), mail service, but also telecommunication, energy, water-supply, culture, education, etc.

However public services have evolved with the demands of citizens, some of them have to face the threat of liberalisation and privatisation. Indeed, based on the European open market and freedom of services, services initially regulated by the state have been liberalized to the open market. So is the case in some European countries of telecommunication, energy and railways.

Based on an economical dogma, the basic argument of liberalisation and privatisation is the increasing of the quality and decreasing the price of the services. However, reality in some European countries has just proved otherwise. Since the liberalisation of public services, prices have increased and quality has been lowered. The right to equal and democratic access has disappeared when services are based on market, competition and conditionality.

In 2013, based on European neoliberal policies and the necessity of financial stability, other public services are being pushed in order to enter the open market, such as water supply and education. If these reforms now only regard a minority of member's state dealing with economic crisis, we should not let those countries double pay the crisis. Furthermore, these practices could easily expand on all the European countries. We condemn firmly this strategy, violating our values of equal rights, social justice and solidarity. For us, the European project serves the people, not the companies.

The Young European Socialists therefore demand:

- To stop liberalization and privatization of public services. History already proved the critical impact on the citizens, harming the access and quality of the services.
- Evaluate the possibility to go backwards on the liberalization and privatization of several public services in Europe such as rail transport, energy or mail.
- To take notice of the European citizenship initiative on the right to water ([www.right2water.eu](http://www.right2water.eu)). This petition is a proof of keeping water distribution and management a public and democratic service. The access to cheap and quality water is a basic right, not a speculative good.
- To exclude liberalization and privatization in the recommendation of the European Commission including in the European solidarity mechanism.

*Done at Vilnius, Lithuania, on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2013.  
Thomas Maes, Secretary General.*