EPSU Calling Notice

for ‘Solidarity vigil’ outside Brussels office of Lower Saxony on eve of negotiations to end German strike deadlock

Attention: news editors
Attention: Photo editors

Venue: Offices of Lower Saxony, 61 rue Montoyer, Brussels
Date and Time: 11.00am 17 May

Action: ‘Solidarity Vigil’ for German Working Time strike on eve of negotiations

(Brussels, 11 May 2006) The European Federation of Public Service Unions, EPSU, in conjunction with Belgian public service trade unions of CGSP-FGTB and CSC services publics will hold a ‘solidarity vigil’ in support of German trade union Ver.di, on the eve of the restarting of negotiations in Berlin, to end a 14 week strike on working time. The strike concerns in particular the regulation of working time at federal state level.

The Vigil will take place outside the Brussels offices of the Land Lower Saxony. The head of the employers’ delegation is the minister of finance of Lower Saxony, Mr. Hartmut Mollring, who has been consistently working against compromise on this issue. A new round of negotiation is foreseen with the Land representatives on 18 - 19 May.

EPSU General Secretary, Carola Fischbach-Pyttel stated, “this solidarity action in Brussels is designed to draw attention to the intransigent stance of the employers. Our German affiliates, Ver.di have a reasonable demand – the right to negotiate and not have significantly increased working hours imposed without any say”.

The employers at federal state level want to unilaterally impose an increase in working time without compensation. The civil servants already have longer working hours in a number of the federal states of 40, 41 and even 42 hours / week. Working hours for contractual workers have so far been at 38.5 hours / week.

Whereas at local and at central state level agreements have been reached the employers at regional level have refused any constructive negotiation so far.

EPSU also wishes to make the link to the ongoing problems regarding the EU working time directive, which is currently blocked in the Council of Ministers, who have so far refused to accept the European Parliament compromise proposal.

For news editors:
This action linked to the following themes:
- The industrial action in Germany calling for fair working hours in the public sector
- The EU working time directive

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For Photo Editors

- The action will take place from 11h00am to 12h00
- Participants will be holding banners and placards outside the LOWER SAXONY offices highlighting the need for the Employers’ Organisation to conduct fair negotiations with Ver.di representatives.
- Banners will be in German, English, French and Dutch

**Practical details**
Starting time **11.00**

**Office of Lower Saxony**
61 Rue Montoyer

If you want to arrange interviews with EPSU leadership, Ver.di representatives or with other participating groups, please call EPSU press officer **Brian Synnott, + 0474 98 96 75.**

For information please contact Brian Synnott, + 32 474 98 96 75 or send an email to epsu@epsu.org

**EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC. 8 million public service workers and their 209 trade unions are members. They organise workers in health and social services, local and national administration, energy, water, waste.**

*For more information on EPSU and our work: [www.epsu.org](http://www.epsu.org)*