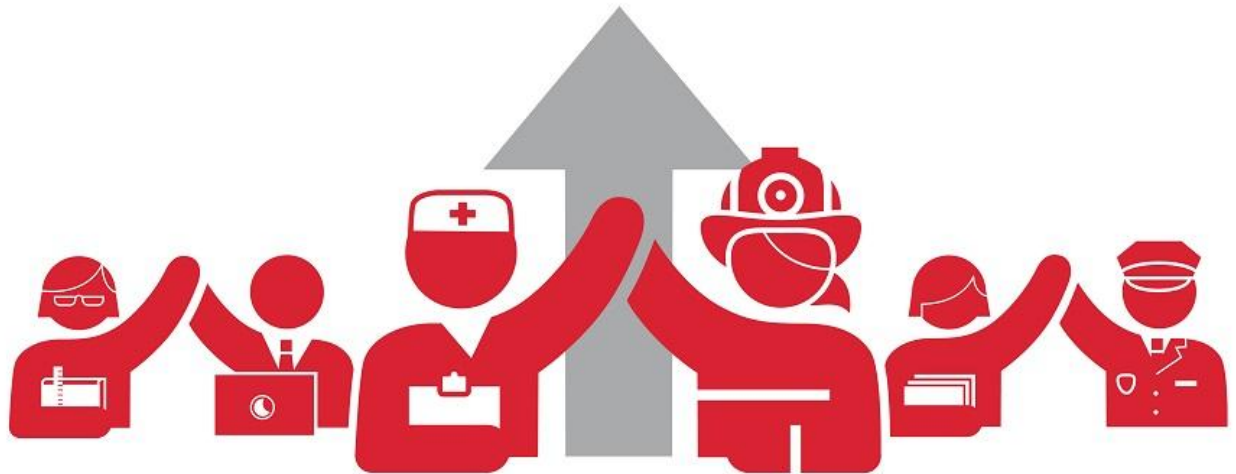


Pension reform, low wages, concerns of young workers and more addressed in the Russia-Central Asia Constituency meeting



PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS NEED A PAY RISE

(19 September 2018) The unions of the constituency met in a situation of much turmoil in Russia. Protests have taken place across the country against proposed reforms of the pension system. The Russian government argues the pension fund from which to pay the pensions is almost broke. The pension reform would bring the retirement age for men up to 65 years. The average age for men in Russia is 66 years and 4 months according to the World Health Organisation. The reforms mean that many men will not be able to enjoy their pensions. The reasons for the lack of money in the fund are explained by the low contributions of employers and the government. This leads to chronic underfunding. Another factor are the exceptions making that the base for funding has been reduced. The unions have made several proposals with alternatives but despite protests across the country the government has remained deaf. For many workers organized by the Russian affiliates the

situation is made worse due to low wages on the basis of which pensions are calculated. Many people are forced to continue working after they retire to make ends meet. The delegates adopted a solidarity message for the Russian workers and the unions seeking changes to the pension plans of the government.

The unions noted with concern the situation of the health workers union in Kazakhstan. The health workers' union rejected proposals of the confederation as undemocratic and undermining the role of the sectoral unions. It left. The confederation established a new union. And many workers come under great to change union membership. The union concentrates its work on increasing wages and getting the problems of liabilities for medical staff sorted out to prevent that all staff are liable in the case of accidents. The topical issues on the agenda were considered like the gender equality and the Our Pay Rises campaign. The unions considered the EPSU Congress, its themes, programme of actions, the changes to the constitution and representation in Congress.

The constituency had a more in-depth discussion about the situation of young workers with young worker delegates specially invited. Representatives of the Youth Committee of the confederation (FNPR) and the Moscow city and Moscow regional youth committees presented their work. A focus on the issues facing young workers at the workplace and in society, training of activists are key to increase membership and several examples were given from different local unions. The unions have turned to social media with short video clips to underline what the union stands for. One of the branches is developing an app to connect better with young workers. The youth representatives shared much in common. They fight against precarious work and are active in union campaigning for better pay and conditions in the public services. Affordable housing for young workers is an issue in all countries of the constituency. They also looked at a youth resolution for the EPSU Congress

The constituency and young workers meeting took place 18 and 19 September 2018, Moscow. It was the first time the trade union of state workers of Tadzhikistan participated in an EPSU event as member.

- **Statement from the Russian-Central Asian Constituency on the proposed pension reform in the Russian Federation**

(adopted by the unions in the constituency meeting, 18 September 2018)



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