

Message of support from EPSU to KESK on its day of strike action for trade union rights

(25 November 2009) EPSU sends its support to the affiliates of KESK and all the workers who are taking strike action or joining demonstrations across Turkey today. The action is an important reminder of the oppressive labour laws in Turkey that continue to restrict trade union. Despite rulings by the European Court of Human Rights, legislation in Turkey continues to impose strike bans and restrictions on collective bargaining across the public sector. Trade union organising is also made more difficult as a result of onerous requirements to meet minimum membership thresholds at both workplace and sectoral level.

Legislation to amend these laws has been drafted and re-drafted several times but has remained stuck in parliament for seven years or more. The European Commission progress report on Turkey's application to join the European Union is unequivocal about the need for the government to amend its labour laws and bring them into line with common practice across Europe.

The action by KESK trade unions today shows that Turkish trade unions are continuing to fight for their rights and that trade unions across Europe support this. We will keep up the pressure on the Turkish government for just and fair labour laws and respect for union rights.

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