

# Solidarity message: Industrial Action 15 June 2010



(14 June 2010) On behalf of EPSU, representing 8 million public service employees, we express our solidarity with the actions in Romania on Tuesday 15 June 2010.

We fully support the opposition of our affiliates to the government's imposed austerity plans following the IMF-led loan as an attempt to respond to the economic crisis.

The plans include the reduction of public sector employees' wages and pensions by 25% and 15% respectively, cuts in public sector jobs by 37 000 and a range of cuts in social benefits including child care allowances.

In close to 20 countries now, including 5 from Eastern Europe outside the EU, governments have resorted to pay freezes, pay cuts, job cuts and recruitment freezes as part of the fiscal consolidation strategies imposed by national governments, often in line with demands from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. As in Romania, public sector trade unions are fighting back with protests and strike actions. Colleagues staged strikes in Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal and France, demonstrations took place in Germany and more actions will follow. The ETUC is calling for a day of action on 29 September 2010.

Attacks on the public sector are a narrow, inadequate and unfair response to the economic crisis. Public services are more vital than ever, not just as an important stabilizing mechanism but to provide essential support to the millions of citizens who are suffering the worse consequences of the crisis.

Public sector workers are not calling for privileges but for decent pay and working conditions to provide the services people need! Public sector workers are nurses, carers, teachers, tax collectors, police and prison officers, labour, health and safety inspectors, social protection administrators, etc... not faceless bureaucrats whose low pay can be cut as it pleases governments.

EPSU calls for sound alternative responses. We want to see, urgent measures to tackle tax fraud, that represent billions of uncollected € in the EU. Taxation needs to be fair and progressive so that the wealthiest and large companies pay their fair due to society and help restore Europe's public services. And the introduction of a tax on all financial transactions is needed to regulate the speculation in the financial sector that was the root cause of the crisis. .

EPSU will ensure that an alternative approach be communicated at national and European level in the run up to the European Council meeting on 17 June next.

We wish Romania's affiliates a successful action.

In solidarity Carola Fischbach-Pyttel EPSU General Secretary