The European Pillar of Broken Promises, Time for a Social Europe

THE INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION AGREEMENT SUMMED UP

- In March 2018, only a few months after co-signing the European Pillar of Social Rights, the Juncker Commission failed to act and provide fundamental EU information and consultation rights to 9.8 million government workers and civil servants, those very rights that are reaffirmed in the Pillar,

- In 2015, the trade unions, led by EPSU, and employers negotiated an agreement for workers and civil servants in central/federal governments, to provide them with EU minimum standards on Information and consultation rights on restructuring, collective redundancies and other key issues.

- The agreement closes a long standing loophole in the EU directives on information and consultation rights that exclude public administrations.

- It was negotiated in line with the social dialogue provisions in the European Treaties that give the right to trade unions and employers at European level to sign agreements that might become EU law.

  - The European Commission, despite having co-signed the European Pillar of Social Rights—which is full of praise for social dialogue, rejected the joint request by the unions and the employers to implement their agreement through a proposal for a directive to the Council for adoption.

- It is an unprecedented move. It took more than two years for the Commission to send the agreement signatories, a short “thanks but no thanks”! This is a direct blow to social partners’ co-legislative rights in the social field.
There is no reason why a tax inspector should not have the same EU rights to information and consultation on the future of his or her job than a tax adviser in a bank.

This is the “equal treatment” argument, both a strong trade-union and EU legal principle.

Fundamental workers’ rights to information and consultation are laid down in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, TFEU article 153.e, ILO Conventions, the European Social Charter and the European Pillar of Social Rights and in the European Pillar of Social Rights since November 2017.

By not implementing this social partners agreement, the European Commission is letting 9.8 million public sector workers down!

The European Federation of Public Service Unions is challenging this decision in the European Court of Justice.

Whether the Court vindicates EPSU’s claim, or not, the political case for EU social standards on information and consultation rights across all EU governments remains to be won.

The May 2019 elections for a new Parliament that will elect the new President of the Commission is a key opportunity to end the discrimination against millions of workers in public administrations!

The new Commission must either reverse the decision made by the Juncker Commission, or table its own legislative proposal in line with the EU’s equal treatment principle.

It is time for a new Commission that respects social dialogue and respects fundamental workers’ rights to information and consultation

Don’t let 9.8 million public workers in the dark!

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