

## **Solidarity with Greek civil servants' General Strike**

**Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**EPSU expresses its solidarity with the Greek civil servants going on strike 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The government must stop implementing policies that put Greece deeper into the crisis. It should work with the unions and others for viable alternatives, for investment and growth that can lead the country out of the crisis.**

**We support the struggle of our sisters and brothers against the measures of this and previous governments that implement a view of a small and flexible state enshrined in the Memoranda negotiated with the European and financial institutions. We reject this view of a state that is only there to oversee the activities of the private sector.**

**The three Memoranda obliged the Greek governments to abolish stable employment relations for civil servants via an evaluation of structures and services since 2011. They were to be replaced by recruitment of staff with flexible working conditions. The determined struggle of the unions has prevented this deterioration of employment conditions from happening so far.**

The government has started a new offensive. The structures of the ministries and public institutions will be reassessed and reformed. This could lead to the abolition of services. Employees risk being evaluated on an individual basis based on objectives set by each ministry. Transfers of civil servants between services and departments are foreseen, changing employment relations and making these more flexible. The government and the lenders are planning to make the rules for collective redundancies more flexible, to reduce the minimum wage and to extend and generalize job rotation schemes. We reject that the government imposes these measures without consultation and negotiations with the unions.

We are concerned that what is called the “implementation of best European practices” as regard labour relations will be an attack on trade union representatives by making it easier to dismiss them. Restrictions on the right to strike are considered which will make it more difficult for workers to protest and resist unjustified proposals.

Part of the latest offensive of the government have been proposals to privatize profitable services. The government adopted legislation establishing a “Hyper-Fund”. The properties of the state will be transferred to this fund which is controlled by the creditors of Greece. It leads to the privatization of the Public Power Corporation (D.E.H.) and will pave the way for the privatization of the water industry. EPSU continues to support the unions fighting this. Our experience in Europe and the world over demonstrates that privatizations do not lead to better quality of services.

EPSU has said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Memorandum of July 2015 hits workers, unemployed, pensioners and the young. It transfers the cost of the crisis to workers and the middle class. The latest proposals of the government confirm this.

**We are convinced that this course of action is a dead end street. We stand with our Greek colleagues in the resistance to the austerity policies and imposed Memorandums. Alternatives are possible as set out by Europe's trade unions. Investment in public services, in education, health and social services and pay increases are now needed. These will lead to growth, less inequality and are a response to unemployment and growing xenophobia and racism.**

**We call for solidarity with the Greek public service workers out on a 24h strike, Thursday 24 November 2016. We wish our brothers and sisters a successful day of action.**

EPSU Secretariat 40 rue Joseph II, box 5 – 1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: +32 2 250 10 80 Fax: +32 2 520 10 99 Mail: [epsu@epsu.org](mailto:epsu@epsu.org) [www.epsu.org](http://www.epsu.org)

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