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Subject: Complaint by our affiliate ROTAL

Dear Prime Minister,

The European Federation of Public Service Unions, (EPSU) which unites over 8 million members of public sector trade unions throughout Europe, received information from its affiliate Trade Union of Workers in State and Self-Government Institutions of Estonia (ROTAL) concerning the infringement of its members' rights. The union has informed EPSU about the violation of rights of specific categories of workers, in particular workers of customs offices.

EPSU deplores this blatant disregard of trade union rights by a EU Member State Government.

In our official role as a recognised European Social Partner, we will be bringing this to the attention of the European Commissioner responsible for Employment and Social Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Spidla. We will inform him that a well functioning social dialogue system is a prerequisite for *all* EU Member States.

For example, according to the laws on border service and on police employees of Estonia, each year of service of a frontier guard and of a policeman during the period of 1990 - 1994 is considered as three years. This is connected with the extremely hard work during these years to protect the borders of the Estonian Republic, which had just become independent.

At the same time the employment conditions of customs workers during these years, which then became members of the Estonian customs office and worked on the border of the country together with police and frontier guards, were unchanged, though it was intended initially to amend it similarly to the frontier guards and policemen.

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EUROPÄISCHER  
GEWERKSCHAFTS-  
VERBAND FÜR DEN  
ÖFFENTLICHEN  
DIENST

We share our affiliate's standpoint that a salary system for civil servants cannot be justified, which provides a remuneration for the highest ranks that exceeds the lowest 15 times and holds extra charges and surcharges for the high ranking positions intransparent.

The government decisions N371 and N372 of 24 December 2004, which determine the conditions of payment of civil servants, were not agreed with ROTAL, a fact that undermines the development of social dialogue in Estonia.

According to our information the government does not implement the agreement on wages, signed on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2004, in which the parties agree to establish minimal wages for certain categories of workers. Thus, since 1<sup>st</sup> January of this year the minimal salary should be between 3500 Estonian Crowns for assistants to tutors children's homes and 5000 Estonian Crowns for senior tutors; for social workers in houses for elderly people it should be 4000 Crowns. However, the government does not implement the agreement under the pretext of shortage of financial resources.

Our affiliate considers it inadmissible that about 100 customs workers lost their jobs in 2004. Since the customs office in Koidule at the Southern border of Estonia to Russia still does not work cargoes are processed 100 km away in Tartu. The trade union proposes to take measures for a speedy establishment of a customs office at this border checkpoint.

The European Federation of Public Service Unions supports the requirements of the Trade Union of Workers in State and Self-Government Institutions and asks the government of Estonia to take appropriate measures as soon as possible.

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel  
EPSU General Secretary