

Letter of solidarity: General strike, Spain, 29th of March 2012

On behalf of the Federation of Trade Unions from Public Administration PUBLISIND and its members, we strongly express our solidarity for the general strike organized by all the Spanish trade union confederations on the 29^h of March 2012.

We fully support the opposition of our colleagues to the government's imposed austerity measures plans regarding the labor's law reforms, but also amendments to the legislation.

We know that Spain's financial situation is deteriorating rapidly, with debt reaching an historic high of 68.5 percent of GDP during the last quarter of 2011. It has now entered its second recession since 2009.

For most of the last decade, Spain kept its fiscal house in strict order, running small deficits or even surpluses. But the country was flooded with money after the introduction of the euro, and since then, Spain has suffered some of the worst unemployment levels seen in Europe; has seen its deficits swell; and has been forced to pay high interest rates as investors worried about its solvency.

The Spanish government announced new austerity measures. The wages of employees of state companies will be cut with about 25%-30%, in order to reduce the budget's deficit with 8%. The first step will be the division of companies, by size. In large companies, the annual salary will be maximum 105,000 Euros, in the medium ones for about 80,000 Euros and the small companies will not exceed 55,000 Euros.

Also, the government is planning the restructuration of the public sector. In the administration, 100 jobs for counselors will be cut off and also, the number of agents from the public sector will be reduced. Another part of the plan, involves the privatization of 10% of state companies. Although Spain's economy grew by 0.7% last year, in the first quarter of 2012, it will return to recession. This means new austerity measures are pending. So far, the government announced cuts of budgetary costs, higher taxes and a plan to combat the tax evasion.

Also, we should mention that the current changes in Spanish labor law follow the current European trend already seen in our country.

We hope that our colleagues will have a successful strike on the 29th of March 2012, to stop the Government's new austerity measures.

In solidarity and with great concern!

Stefan Teodor
President

