



To all EPSU Serbian affiliates

REF. JWG/lt

Contact person: Jan Willem Goudriaan
Brussels, 21 January 2014

No amendments to Labour Law

Dear colleagues,

EPSU sends solidarity greetings to all its affiliates in Serbia and the rest of the Serbian trade union movement in their campaign to stop the government's planned changes to labour legislation.

We understand that these amendments will have a serious impact on workers' rights, including changes to severance pay, compensation for sick leave and paid leave.

EPSU is also extremely concerned about amendments that will hinder the position of trade union representatives and the right to collective bargaining and believes that it is wrong that salaries and working hours will no longer have to be stipulated in employment contracts.

It appears that the Serbian government is more interested in changing employment legislation to suit international investors rather than looking to create the right conditions for decent jobs.

EPSU believes it is important for trade unions across Europe to show support for their Serbian colleagues because the European Commission also appears to be behind the pressure for reform.

The European Commission's 2013 Progress Report on Serbia (a Staff Working Document published in October) claims that: "There are a number of restrictions related to severance payments, duration of fixed-term employment, industry-wide collective agreements, termination of employment, payroll calculation and compensations which are obstacles to job creation and reduce labour flexibility."

In view of the European Commission's recent record, particularly as a member of the Troika, in intervening in Member States' national industrial relations systems and attacking collective bargaining arrangements, it is crucial that as European trade unions we express our solidarity for our Serbian colleagues and our opposition to the kinds of labour market reforms that are all about increasing precarious employment and flexibility only on the employers' terms.

We hope that the one-hour warning strike on 23rd January, called by the two main trade union confederations and supported by many independent unions, will have the widest support possible and that this and any planned protest actions will lead the government to revise its proposals.

In solidarity,

Jan Willem Goudriaan
EPSU Deputy General Secretary

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