

To EPSU affiliated unions in Lithuania

Ref. : JWG/sd  
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Dear Colleagues,

We are sending our solidarity greetings to all the Lithuanian unions who are protesting against the new Labour Code. We have been following developments since last autumn when the unions launched their first demonstrations.

It is clear that the key changes being introduced are all about greater flexibility for employers and fewer or weaker protection for workers. The new Code will make it easier and cheaper for employers to dismiss employees. Rules on fixed-term work and working time will also be relaxed.

It is no surprise that the union campaign slogan has been “No to slavery at work”. Lithuanian youth organisations have been supporting the campaign as young workers will suffer particularly from more precarious employment conditions.

Last year, we wrote protest letters to the President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Parliament. We argued that labour market reforms like the ones being proposed in Lithuania are of the kind promoted by the Troika. They are seen as solutions to the economic crises facing countries like Greece and Lithuania.

The evidence is clear that they undermine basic rights for workers and trade unions. There is further no evidence that they contribute to kind of improved economic performance claimed by the Lithuanian government. In fact, by creating much more precarious employment conditions they will undermine the economic recovery.

We expect that your continuing protests in Kudirka Square will be widely supported. We stand with you in solidarity to convince the President to veto the legislation.

In solidarity,



Jan Willem Goudriaan  
EPSU General Secretary