

Brussels, 15 June 2021

The Panhellenic Federation of Labour Metalworkers

Attn: President Dimitris Tsokas, <http://www.e-poem.gr>

The Panhellenic Energy Federation

Attn: President Panagiotis Kontousiadis, info@poenergias.gr

Dear Colleagues, Dear Comrades,

Re.: Unacceptable Labour Law Proposed in Greece

I am shocked to learn what changes the Greek government has outlined in its proposal to the parliament. This country's workers had to go through a decade of hardship with reduced purchasing power and precarious employment after the financial crisis in 2008. In the same period, the share of workers covered by a collective agreement fell dramatically. All of these changes were supported or even instigated by the EU Troika despite strong reactions from the European trade union movement.

The initiative by the current conservative government of Mr. Mitsotakis would only add to an already difficult situation and must be rejected by Parliament. They are contrary to the European Pillar of Social Rights, to which all EU Member States are signatories. Furthermore, they conflict with the spirit of the Social Summit organised in Porto only last month.

In a time when many countries, including the social partners, discuss reductions of weekly hours in order to distribute employment more fairly, the Greek government suggests scrapping the 8-hour day and opening up for 10 hours. This would turn the clock back many decades and reverse hard-fought battles of trade unions to establish a balance between work and private life for their members. More overtime would disrupt the lives of workers and lead to burnouts.

The right to strike is a fundamental trade union right and a human right laid down by international conventions. Stricter rules on how to take industrial action would violate principles that are globally recognised as essential to the functioning of a social model.

IndustriAll Europe stands together with the Greek workers in this tense situation. We fully understand your protests and call on responsible politicians in Greece to respect social dialogue, collective bargaining and basic workers' rights. The authorities should sit down with the trade unions and try to find sensible solutions to present-day challenges in the labour market, without returning to systems that belong to the past.

We call on all the industriAll Europe affiliated organisations to support your fight.

Best regards,



Luc Triangle
General Secretary