



EPSU Executive Committee Statement

In support of Czech trade union demonstration on 21 May

Defend pay, employment rights and pensions!

No to the changes to the labour code!

The EPSU Executive Committee, meeting online on 16 May 2024, sends its solidarity greetings to EPSU affiliates in the Czech Republic and the CMKOS trade union confederation in support of their national demonstration in Prague on 21 May.

The EPSU Executive agrees that the Czech government's proposed amendments to the labour code are an unacceptable attack on pensions and employment rights and mark a failure to properly transpose the EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages.

Employers should not be given the right to sack workers for no reason. This opens the door to unequal treatment and increased discrimination. The proposed extension of probationary periods and reduction of notice periods will both act to create a more precarious and uncertain environment for workers.

The system of guaranteed wages is important to ensure that pay reflects the demands of the job and abolition will undermine fairness in the labour market and risk increasing the exploitation of cheap labour. It flies in the face of the spirit of the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive that aims at strengthening collective bargaining and pay setting.

With the age of healthy life expectancy only just over 61 in the Czech Republic, it is completely unjust to increase the retirement age.

At a time when the European Union has taken the significant step of seeking improvements to minimum wages and collective bargaining by passing the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive, the Czech government is moving in the opposite direction. Its proposed changes to the labour code will deliver a more precarious labour market rather than one that promotes quality employment and fair pay.

Rather than focusing on measures to cut costs, the government should be looking at ways to strengthen the labour market and provide decent work and pensions.

The EPSU Executive Committee calls on the Czech government to withdraw its negative changes to the labour code and initiate a proper process of social dialogue with the trade union movement with a view to improving and extending employment rights for all workers.