



Dear Friends,

In these difficult times of the pandemic, we are observing with great concern the recent actions taken by the Hungarian government.

We are particularly concerned about Decree 10412020 (which entered into force on 11 April), introduced by the government, which gives the employer all the power to unilaterally order 24-month working time calculation, while prohibiting any derogations in collective agreements.

This measure complements the previous government decree on measures "to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the national economy" (dated 18.03), which suspended the provisions of the Labour Code, for the period of the state of emergency' - by making workers vulnerable and suspending collective agreements. The amendment to the Labour Code was made with the argument of "making employment regulations more flexible in order to facilitate future agreements between employers and employees".

Furthermore, as we know, the Hungarian government intends to outsource employees from libraries, museums, archives, social cultural centres, theatres and orchestras to public employees. According to the draft, the amendment would change the status of the public employee, which has existed since 1992, of about 20,000 employees since 1 November 2020, without prior negotiations with the trade union confederations that represent employees in these areas and without substantial consultation with the trade unions that are present in these areas. The bill was discussed in Parliament on 21 April and will soon be put to a vote.

The unexpected and particularly cynical actions of the government, without any consultation with the trade unions, constitute a violation of all international labour standards. Neither the procedure nor the intentions are acceptable and justified, especially now, during the coronavirus epidemic, when the trade unions have limited capacity to act due to the public health situation, due to restrictions on communication and assembly.

The actions of the Hungarian government, or any other government acting in the same anti-worker spirit, are unacceptable to trade unions. Having ratified the fundamental ILO conventions, Hungary should respect these conventions and act in accordance with their provisions, in respect for international law and the obligations arising from the ratification of these conventions.

Any attempt to suspend workers' rights in all circumstances is not only a violation of fundamental workers' rights. It is an unjustified path leading to conflicts and social unrest.

Dear friends, we understand very well your legitimate concerns about the fate of Hungarian workers. We would like to express our protest against the changes and our full support for any action you take against the actions of the Hungarian government, acting to the detriment of employees, contrary to basic labour standards.

In solidarity,

Piotr Duda
President