



Industrianställda i Norden • Pohjoismaiden Teollisuustyöntekijät • Nordic-IN

Stockholm 8 September 2015

Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius

Dear Prime minister Prime Minister Butkevičius

It is with concern that the Nordic Industrial Trade unions have followed the process of reform of the Lithuanian Labour code.

We find the reform on a number of points in contradiction with fundamental European principles, which we expect Lithuania as a member of the European Union to uphold. Furthermore we find them in total contradiction to your own stated goals of ensuring the protection of employees, promoting work-life balance and the principle of comprehensive protection of employment rights.

In particular we wonder about the discrimination of trade unions in relation to works councils, where the number of trade union works council members is strictly limited. Based on the European tradition, expressed for instance through the European directive on European Works Councils, we see no basis for such a limitation. Trade union freedom, including the freedom of trade union members to seek election to posts inside and outside the company is a fundamental right, expressed in EU Social Charter as well as ILO convention 87.

We strongly object to a wholesale erosion of labour protection and labour rights. Introduction of zero-hour contracts and opening for a 60 hour work week together with drastically reduced notice periods and severance pay will have profound negative social effects for Lithuanian workers. Art. 24 European Social Charter requires valid reasons and / or compensation for dismissals. An extension of the normal working week on a permanent basis to 60 hours will be in contravention of the existing EU working time directive.

We are also concerned with the legislative process, where trade unions from the beginning was completely absent in the design of such an important set of labour legislation. This also is in contradiction with the spirit of social Europe

Economic growth does not happen through impoverishment of the workforce and deprivation of fundamental rights. Flexibility on the labour market must be balanced by a credible and strong element of security. Trade union involvement in a legislation process of this kind is paramount.

We call for the legislation to be withdrawn and fundamentally be redesigned with appropriate trade union involvement.

Yours sincerely

Anders Ferbe
President

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Jens Bundvad
General Secretary

Nordic IN is the federation of all unions in manufacturing industry, and mining in the Nordic countries. Nordic INs 20 affiliates have more than 1 million members

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