

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES FOR THE TRADE UNIONS IN LITHUANIA?

14TH ANNUAL TURI CONFERENCE

VILNIUS, 21 SEPTEMBER 2022



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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN LITHUANIA – ARE WE ON A RIGHT TRACK?

- The majority of collective agreements were concluded in the public sector - 66 percent, meanwhile in the private sector - 34 percent, twice less;
- Collective agreements amortized the tension among the workers, helped to overcome uncertainty and maintain businesses in pandemic and post-pandemic period.
- According to the Lithuanian Labor Code collective agreements can be arranged differently from what is regulated by the Labor Code itself, such as flexible and individual working time regime, learning leave, social partnership support measures, higher overtime than the Labor Code, etc.



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- A lack of employers' motivation to negotiate, especially in a branch level;
- Some employers consider a collective agreement “just a piece of paper”...
- Probably a mandatory and imperative legal basis imposed from the above, such as directive, would help workers to fight back their voice?
- Will the imposed legal act improve the quality of collective agreements and social dialogue if in fact not all employers have a motivation to negotiate and to make agreements with their workers?



IS A RIGHT TO STRIKE REALLY A RIGHT OR AN IMPOSSIBLE CHALLENGE?



- The right to strike is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as in the Labor Code, with some exceptions and limitations for vital services;
- employers often take advantage of loopholes in the Labor Code's strike and lockout provisions, and often organizing a strike ends up in the court, and not always in favor of the workers;
- A problem of lack of resources in trade unions— either human or financial;
- People here hardly mobilize for strikes - they are simply afraid of harassments from the employers or losing their job.



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- Examples of poor employer's behaviour in hindering a strike process - the case of the Lithuanian fertilizers' producer Achema.
- The Labor Code prohibits striking in areas of natural disaster, regions where mobilization, war, and state of emergency have been declared.
- In the Labor Code draft under consideration in the Seimas, it is proposed not to prohibit strikes, but to limit them, if they could have an impact on the circumstances;
- Trade unions seek to remove the word "prohibited" from the said provision of the Labour Code.

OTHER MAIN CHALLENGES FOR TRADE UNIONS IN LITHUANIA

- The spiralling cost of living impacts workers' security and purchasing power. Many feel unsafe for their workplaces and are afraid of dismissals;
- The need for trade unions to balance between saving the jobs and inevitability for sustainable development and just transition in companies.
- The organizing issues, especially between young employees;
- The issue of attracting new members, especially young people;
- No new leaders – no foundation for the future of the trade unions.



THANK YOU!

