

Declaration of Support to all Public Sector Workers and their Unions in Denmark

ETUC urges the Danish public employers to ensure unrestricted collective bargaining and withdraw threat of lockout

Dear Colleagues,

The ETUC supports your demands and struggle to win fair wage growth in the public sector, reflecting the wage development in the private sector. We also support your call for a collective agreement to regulate the teachers working hours.

With this letter we - the voice of workers representing 45 million members from 89 trade union organisations in 39 European countries and 10 European Trade Union Federations – give our full support to the trade unions in the public sector in Denmark fighting for better working conditions of their members.

We are deeply concerned about the threatened lockout in the public sector, especially in a country where employment relationships are based on a model of social dialogue, collective bargaining and collective action.

The right to collective bargaining and collective action are fundamental rights guaranteed in the European Union. Member States have to respect the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Article 152 TFEU recognises and promotes the role of social partners and of social dialogue. Article 28 of the Charter guarantees the right to collective bargaining and collective action. In addition, Article 6 of the European Social Charter guarantees the right to bargain collectively and the right to collective action. Denmark also proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Pillar promotes social dialogue and requires full respect for fair wages, the right to collective bargaining and collective action.

The threatened lockout of 90% of state employees and 50 % of municipal employees is very aggressive. It represents a total overreaction to a notice of a strike of 10% of the public workforce. We suspect that the lockout is a tactic to bring the Government into the dispute and thereby serve to provide the Government with an excuse to intervene in the conflict and undermine the Danish system of collective bargaining.

Danish authorities must live up to their responsibilities and foster free negotiations. We expect that the Danish government will bear in mind the criticism the former Danish government received from the ILO after the lockout of the Danish teachers in 2013 and act accordingly. We will keep Europe's workers informed.

Your success will be our success.

Yours sincerely,

Luca Visentini

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luca Visentini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ETUC General Secretary