

Message of solidarity

The DGB logo is located in the top right corner. It consists of the letters 'DGB' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a red parallelogram background that has a slight 3D effect with a shadow.

for the European Day of Action

The global financial and economic crisis is now in its fifth year. In southern Europe in particular, people are suffering from the effects of a crisis for which they were not responsible. It is above all working people who have to bear the main burden of the crisis, whereas the wealthy and those in the financial sector who caused it have been allowed to escape unscathed.

The harsh, one-sided austerity policies pursued by governments merely exacerbate the crisis and put an unreasonable strain on working people, who have to fear for their jobs – if they have not already lost them. Unemployment has been rising steadily, and youth unemployment in particular is going to put a heavy burden on the countries concerned in the future. Wages are being cut, workers' rights undermined, pensions and benefits slashed – at a time when social protection is more necessary than ever.

Workers' rights are fundamental human rights. We strongly condemn the current attacks on collective bargaining autonomy and the dismantling of workers' rights. What we need is not fewer rights and less protection for employees but more democracy, social security and justice.

Instead of wrecking Europe with austerity policies, what we need are solutions based on solidarity and a programme for growth and employment. And we are not just talking about working conditions and future prospects for our colleagues in Spain, Greece, Ireland or Portugal – the crisis does not stop at national frontiers. If workers' rights are weakened all over Europe and demand continues to fall, the crisis will sooner or later arrive at our own doorstep.

European integration is based on a common commitment to the creation of a democratic and social Europe – and that includes strong works councils and trade unions, protection of collective bargaining autonomy and recognition of basic workers' rights. Only if we close ranks and work together will we be able to halt the intolerable cuts in social benefits and the dismantling of workers' rights. Together we call for a fair, democratic and social Europe and declare our solidarity with colleagues in all the countries of Europe.

Decision of the Federal Council on 29.10.12