



Prime-minister - Florin Vasile Cîțu  
[cabinet.pm@gov.ro](mailto:cabinet.pm@gov.ro);  
[contact@sqq.ro](mailto:contact@sqq.ro); [pm@gov.ro](mailto:pm@gov.ro)

Ref.: JWG/sh

Brussels, 15 January 2021

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to you as General Secretary of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU). We organise over 8 million workers in 50 countries and are officially the only trade union organisation recognised in relation to the health sector social dialogue at European level.

At the request of SANITAS, a representative federation according to national legislation in the fields of health and social care and on behalf of our affiliates in these sectors, I would like to raise serious concerns about the decision of the government (Emergency Ordinance 226/2020) to freeze salaries and bonuses. We believe that this is an unjustifiable attack on the pay of essential workers, particularly the healthcare staff who continue to risk so much in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. We think it is unacceptable to unilaterally block pay increases that were set out in Law 153/2017 which provided for a four-step salary increase for health and social care workers for the health and social care sector.

It is also the more urgent that the pay rises are implemented because we understand that otherwise the freeze will disproportionately affect lower paid workers such as healthcare assistants, carers and admin staff while many higher paid staff have already been granted pay increases. It is vital that the efforts of these workers are recognised and appropriate pay rises implemented. If not, it will only act to undermine the morale for these stressed and overworked employees, who are already disadvantaged by the freezing of bonuses. It will also do nothing to discourage them from considering the options of leaving the profession or maybe even the country for the sake of their health and wellbeing.

We support the claims of our affiliates and are in solidarity with the national protests that were launched on the initiative of SANITAS on 12 January. We are concerned that the right to social dialogue is not being respected in Romania and this is a systematic violation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

I look forward to your response and commitment to abide by the existing legislation.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Willem Goudriaan  
EPSU General Secretary

cc. Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights [CAB-SCHMIT-ARCHIVES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CAB-SCHMIT-ARCHIVES@ec.europa.eu)

EPSU Secretariat 40 rue Joseph II, box 5 - 1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: +32 2 250 10 80 Fax: +32 2 520 10 99 Mail: [epsu@epsu.org](mailto:epsu@epsu.org) [www.epsu.org](http://www.epsu.org)

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Профсоюзов  
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EPSU is a member  
federation of the ETUC  
and represents  
PSI in Europe.



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[contact@sqq.ro](mailto:contact@sqq.ro); [pm@gov.ro](mailto:pm@gov.ro)

Ref.: JWG/ns/rp

Brussels, 12 March 2021

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to you to express disappointment not to have received a reply to my letter of 15 January (attached) and to ask for urgent action in response to our call for you to support social dialogue with the public sector unions in Romania.

As I said in my earlier letter, we regard it as unacceptable that the government took the unilateral decision (Emergency Ordinance 226/2020) to freeze public sector salaries and bonuses. We reiterate that this is an unjustifiable attack on the pay of essential workers, particularly the healthcare and social services staff who continue to risk so much in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about the refusal of the government even to enter a process of social dialogue with the trade unions. This comes at a time when the European Commission has published its roadmap for the European Pillar of Social Rights, principle 8 of which clearly calls for support for social dialogue and collective bargaining.

We also understand from our affiliates, not least in prison services, that attacks have been made on the legitimacy of independent trade unions, their right to receive check-off dues and their right to protest; on the latter we underline that our affiliated unions are responsible organisations who organised protests in due respect to covid-19 related distancing and mask wearing measures. These are all fundamental rights guaranteed by international and European conventions and it is alarming that an EU government is calling them into question.

We are in touch with the European Commission on this matter and have already received an initial letter from Commissioner Schmit that notes the Commission's call for "adequate consultations and improvement of social dialogue in Romania". We will follow this up and urge the Commission to stress the importance of social dialogue in the context of the European Pillar and to underline the need to respect the basic rights of trade unions

I look forward to your response this time and commitment to engage with our affiliates with a view to resolve this situation.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Willem Goudriaan  
EPSU General Secretary

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