



# MONTHLY BULLETIN

Publication of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia

No. 23/24

November/December 2015

## GREAT VICTORY OF CCM IN THE DEFENSE OF WORKERS' RIGHTS

**18.11.2015**

The Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia (CCM) has led a struggle for realization of workers' rights related to the right to wage, a minimum wage, an annual leave and other allowances and benefits. Upon the initiative of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia for the first time in the history of labor and criminal legislation, the non-respect of these rights is being treated as a criminal act.

The Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia in its program, especially in the Program of the 19th Congress of CCM has put a special emphasis on the fight against undeclared work and informal economy. Within this framework our constant activity was submitting proposals and amendments of certain laws that have been directed towards protection of wages, especially the minimum wage and payment of allowances.

In this regard we have pointed out the frequent occurrence of reduced salary payments, salaries in an envelope, return of cash to the employer etc. As it was known, on 2.11.2015, we launched a Campaign against undeclared work and informal economy and we have engaged all our structures in order to prevent the abuse of workers' rights, violation of labor rights, the return of cash to employers, benefit cuts, nonpayment or return of the annual recourse, the practice of reporting lower wages that have created serious problems with regard to the financing of the social security, depriving these workers and their families from protection against mandatory social risks.

The latest survey has shown that over 22.5% of workers are being involved in certain type of informal economy and undeclared work, and about 7% according to the survey have a job without employment contract and are faced with the problem of payment of lower wages or salaries in cash.

Due to such problems, CCM as one of the most important factors in the social partnership and one of the entities that first has requested an amendment to the Criminal Code deems that the latest draft amendments which stipulate:

In Article 166, after paragraph 1 two new paragraphs shall be added, which are the following:

"(2) Any person who shall ask the worker to return or to receive a certain amount of salary or other allowances paid by the employer shall be punished with imprisonment of three months to one year.

(3) The punishment of paragraph (2) shall be imposed to an employer who shall dismiss an employee who have reported the employer or gave testimony as a witness that he/she has been asked to return a certain amount of the salary or other allowances paid by the employer or has not return the requested amount.

Paragraph (2) becomes paragraph (4).

- shall provide an opportunity for prevention and sanction of such phenomenon and shall allow a greater fight in the protection of wages, especially the minimum wage, workers' rights and social and economic security.

At the same time this measure shall encourage all workers to report the abuses of certain employers and shall enable the institutions and the unions to be even more actively involved in the struggle to achieve labor rights in the country.

CCM expresses its satisfaction that the initiative of CCM that was promoted for a longer period together with the social partners is being realized in this manner.

## A CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT GREY ECONOMY AND UNDECLARED WORK

2.11.2015

The Federation of Trade Unions and the Youth Section of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia on 2.11.2015 started a campaign to combat gray economy, titled "Join in and say STOP to grey economy, say STOP to undeclared work" within the Project "Taxes, informal economy and corruption in the Western Balkan countries", implemented by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Pan-European Regional Council (PERC) and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO).



Caption 1. The President Mitrevski on the panel debate



Caption 2. The Press Conference

The launch of the campaign, for which propaganda materials (posters and flyers) have been prepared, was followed by a press conference on which the President Mitrevski stressed that the campaign will include a series of measures referring to trainings for the unemployed.

- We start this campaign against this social evil, to combat illegal work. The analysis of previous studies has shown that approximately 22.5 percent of people are included in the informal economy in Macedonia, said, President Mitrevski.

On the panel debate his address had the President of CCM, PhD Zhivko Mitrevski, the President of the Youth Section, M.Sc. Lidija Naskovska, representatives of the IPA Project: Support to the fight against undeclared work, Mr. Geoffrey Fieldhouse, team leader, Brian Kearney, KE2 and representatives from the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia, Lile Petrova, CCM and Ljupco Vasilevski RTUO Bitola.

The main objective of the panel debate is launching a campaign to combat grey economy and undeclared work, increasing the capacity and awareness among young people about this particular issue, learning ways of transition from informal to formal form of employment and strengthen the capacities of the various national actors involved in the fight against undeclared work. This campaign will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the fight against undeclared work in the country through a systematic and coordinated involvement of relevant institutional actors and social partners in the fight against undeclared work.

The President of CCM, PhD Zhivko Mitrevski noted that the formalization of the informal economy remains an area of high priority for the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia. It is estimated that the informal employment accounts for more than 22.5% of total employment in the country (58 811 out of 271 307 employed women and 93 993 out of 407 531 employed men). The high incidence of informal employment has various negative consequences on the economy, working conditions in general and the process of policy-making. Low tax revenues owed to the lack of contributions from wages, limits the capacity of the Government to introduce effective policies for the labor market and social protection. Additionally, the large segment of the informal economy and the widespread practice of reporting lower wages create serious problems for the scope and financing of social security systems, thus depriving these workers and their families from protection against the significant social risks.

The representatives of the IPA Project: Support to the fight against undeclared work, Mr. Geoffrey Fieldhouse, team leader, and Brian Kearney, an expert, had a presentation entitled: The role of social partners in the fight against undeclared work, in which they presented the survey on undeclared work conducted in country through 2019 successful interviews. Also they presented the current situation in Macedonia regarding the undeclared work, its size, scope and nature as well as presentation of various campaigns on informal economy in Europe and the world.

In their presentations, the representatives of the CCM, Lile Petrova and Ljupco Vasilevski explained the meaning of the employment contract as a prerequisite for eradication of undeclared work and gave a comparative analysis of national legislation with EU legislation.

## **SIGNED A NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT FOR THE EMPLOYEES IN MAKEDONSKI ZELEZNICI INFRASTRUKTURA**



The Trade Union of the Railway workers of Macedonia- Infrastruktura on 17.11.2015 signed a new collective agreement for the employees in the Makedonski Zeleznici- Infrastruktura.

The signing of the Collective Agreement was attended by the leadership of Makedonski Zeleznici- Infrastruktura, the Director Irfan Asani, the Assistant Director of the HR Department, Slavica Popovska and the Assistant Director of the Legal Department, Petar Spasovski and the President of the Trade Union of the Workers in Transport and Communications of the Republic Macedonia (SRSVM), and also a

Caption 1. The Director of the Makedonski Zeleznici Infrastruktura, Irfan Asani and the President of SRSVM, Metodija Dimeski, also a President of the Union of Railway workers of Macedonia- Infrastruktura

President of the Trade Union of Railway workers- Infrastruktura of Macedonia, Metodija Dimeski.

The new collective agreement includes provisions on the rights of employees, insurance, salaries, information, trade union organizing, liabilities and other issues.

The President of the railway workers, Metodija Dimeski has been paying special attention to the rights of the employees and in the future he shall continuously work on improving the working conditions as a prerequisite for greater efficiency and motivation.

## THE PRESIDENT OF CCM HELD A MEETING WITH THE CHIEF OF GS OF ARM

5.11.2015

On 5 November 2015, the President of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia (CCM), PhD Zhivko Mitrevski had a meeting with the Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia, Lieutenant Metodija Velickovski.



Caption 1. The President Mitrevski on the meeting with the Lieutenant Velickovski

During the meeting which is first of this kind since the appointment of the Chief of GS of ARM, Lieutenant Velickovski, the possibilities for cooperation of CCM and the Army of RM were discussed with regard to realization of commonly agreed standards and norms of international law in the working area of the Army of RM, as well as current labor rights developments.

Most of the members of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia are trade union members in the Trade Union of Defense and Security, affiliate member in the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia.

## SIGNED NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS IN TEXTILE, LEATHER AND SHOE INDUSTRY

4.12.2015

The President of the Association of textile industry of the Organization of Employers of Macedonia, Dimitar Popovski, the President of the Association for leather and shoe industry of the Organization of Employers of Macedonia, Kostadin Barzov, the president of the Union of STKC, member of CCM, Angjelko Angjelkovski, today formally signed the collective agreements for the textile, leather and shoe industry. The signing was attended by the President of the Organization of Employers of Macedonia, Angel Dimitrov, and the President of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia, Zhivko Mitrevski, PhD who expressed satisfaction with this act with which once again it was confirmed that the social dialogue on bipartite level has made progress in the area of regulating the rights and obligations of workers and employers in the economy.

## SEE YOUTH MEETING: ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN TRADE UNIONS

2 - 3.12.2015

The meeting of young trade unionists from SEE “Role of communication in trade unions” was held on 2-3 December 2015 in Skopje, Macedonia. The meeting was attended by 20 young trade unionists from Albania, BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia, Sweden, and Ukraine. Participants from Macedonia were M.Sc. Lidija Naskovska, President of the Youth Section of CCM and M.Sc. Irena Ivanovska, International Department of CCM. The meeting was organized within ITUC/ PERC – LO TCO Project for SEE.

The meeting of young trade unionists from SEE “Role of communication in trade unions” was held on 2-3 December 2015 in Skopje, Macedonia. The meeting was attended by 20 young trade unionists from Albania, BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia, Sweden, and Ukraine. Participants from Macedonia were M.Sc. Lidija Naskovska, President of the Youth Section of CCM and M.Sc. Irena Ivanovska, International Department of CCM. The meeting was organized within ITUC/ PERC – LO TCO Project for SEE.

Purpose of the meeting was to gather young trade union representatives from the region, exchange experiences about the relevance of communication in trade unions, adopt new skills and improve the existing ones, and establish the Network of SEE Youth for communication.

The examples of ways in communication in trade unions were presented during the meeting, the current trends in communication and what this communication should be with the members and potential members, which tools and channels are used for communication, and which are the priorities for communication in the region.



Caption 1. Participants on the meeting, representatives from Youth Sections from SEE countries

The meeting was opened by M.Sc. Lidija Naskovska, President of the Youth Section of CCM who presented the ways of communications of the union with its members as well as the new communication strategy of CCM.

Anton Leppik and Tim Noonan addressed the participants by Skype on behalf of ITUC/ PERC from Brussels. Participants had an opportunity to discuss the matters of communication, PERC priorities and ITUC campaigns with colleagues from Brussels.

Åsa Odin Ekman, TCO Sweden, presented interesting video examples in her presentation, examples how the young people are engaged in Swedish trade unions, why is it difficult for trade unions to reach young people, what is the Swedish model applied, and she pointed at ample other matters for discussions about communication.

Olesia Briazgunova, KVPU Ukraine, Vice President of PERC Youth Committee, spoke about PERC Youth Committee, its activities and priorities for newly elected Committee, and she introduced the brochure “Introducing Unions to Yung People”. Participants showed a great interest for the brochure and gave their positive comments.

The end of the first day was rounded with a fruitful discussion in which participants exchanged their experiences and best practices in the area of communications, as well as highlighting the shortcomings that should be overcome.

The second day of the workshop was devoted to group work where participants were divided into two groups. The first group worked in the area of improving communication in the unions, while the second group focused on improving communication with the members, and potential members. Following the two-day meeting, the Network for Communication in SEE was established, with a wish for further activities and building trade union strategy for better communication, both at national and regional levels.

# ETUI– TRAINING COURSE ORGANIZING OF TU REPRESENTATIVES IN MULTINATIONAL COMAPNIES

4-6.11.2015

In the period from 4-6 November 2015 in the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia, supported by the Education Center of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUI/ETUC) a course titled: Organizing Trade Union representatives in multinational companies” was held.



Caption 1. Participants on the course

This training was attended by 18 representatives from Europe including 3 representatives from the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia, branch trade unions: Elizabeta Gelevska, representative from STKC, Drakce Dimkovski, representative from SIER, Metodija Dimeski, president of the Union of SRSVM and M.Sc. Lidija Naskovska, Advisor to the President on Projects and EU integration who was also a trainer on the course.

The training aimed at identification of main tools and methods directed towards mapping, organization and finding easier ways of organizing and mobilizing new membership in the multinational companies through concrete actions.

**Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia**  
**Str. 12ta Makedonska Udarna Brigada 2-A, 1000 Skopje**  
**Contact tel./fax +389 2 3161374**  
**E-mail: [info@ssm.org.mk](mailto:info@ssm.org.mk)**  
**web: [www.ssm.org.mk](http://www.ssm.org.mk)**