



Industrianställda i Norden • Pohjoismaiden Teollisuustyöntekijät • Nordic-IN

Now is the time for solidarity

By **Claus Jensen**, President of Nordic IN, Vice Presidents **Marie Nilsson**, **Riku Aalto**, **Lise Lyngsnes Randeberg** and General Secretary **Reijo Paananen**

"The current crisis is unprecedented in the history of the European Union. No life, no workplace, no business remains unaffected from this global shock". Last week, Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron formulated what we all agree on regarding the current crisis in Europe. The global pandemic has not only caused death in Europe. It has also left Europe in a state of emergency with lockdown, rising unemployment, and most likely economic recession in the near future. Europe has faced crises before. These crises have been tackled in different ways. As Nordic industrial trade unions, our message is clear: Now is the time for solidarity in Europe – and we support the intentions of Merkel and Macron to help particularly Southern Europe to recover as quickly as possible.

Let us rewind time. Think about the financial crisis that hit Europe in 2008-2009. Think about the chaos concerning working people because of the austerity measures in the EU countries. Think about the political instability in Europe that was created due to the fact that Europe was hit by an economic crisis. It would be unfruitful to repeat that chaos one more time. Instead of internal disagreements, we should act quickly to make sure that Europe recovers from the present crisis. A fierce stimulus of the economy is needed, and it would benefit all European economies, not just those who are worst off at the moment. A replay of the austerity measures would be devastating. This also means, that we from the Nordic side should pay particular attention to support our European colleagues.

Europe needs a long-term plan for recovery. More than anyone, we believe that a strong industry is the key to recovery. Industry accounts for one quarter of the European GDP. Already now, industry is the backbone of the European economy. Involvement of social partners is the key to solving our challenge. In the Nordic countries, we have seen for a century the positive effects of involving social partners and genuine social dialogue. In the present crisis, we as labour unions have been proactive and deeply involved in finding common solutions with the employers in the Nordic countries.

All empirical evidence shows that the most well-functioning labour markets in Europe are where social partners jointly take the responsibility for the overall development of the labour market as well at company level. Therefore the recovery plan must ensure the involvement of the social partners at the national level and it must be a condition that neither the autonomy of the national social partners nor the national collective bargaining systems are undermined or weakened as a consequence of the implementation or the financing of the recovery plan.

Merkel's and Macron's ideas were born only a few days ago. But as Nordic trade unions our message shall be clear: Now is the time for solidarity with the rest of Europe.

25 May 2020

Olof Palmes Gata 11 · SE-105-52 · STOCKHOLM – Sweden

Tel: +46-8 786 8000

E-mail: post@nordic-in.org · www.nordic-in.org



Nordic IN is an organisation for industrial trade unions in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland coordinating joint European and global influencing. The 21 Member organisations represent more than one million wage earners.