

**Question for written answer E-014136/2015/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)

Subject: Against attempts to criminalise the fight for workers' rights

Greece is witnessing the increasing criminalisation of the struggle by workers to oppose layoffs and to support collective bargaining, better working conditions and the payment of unpaid wages (thousands of workers have not been paid by their employers for months).

Over the last three years, seamen of the island of Thassos and local citizens (some 40 people) have been systematically prosecuted on identical charges for participating in legitimate strike action to oppose the abolition of collective wage agreements. Three persons have been sentenced to several months' imprisonment, fourteen others have had criminal charges brought against them and many other lawsuits are pending on the same grounds. Successive governments have dealt with striking seamen and others (Metro workers, teachers, etc.) through political mobilisation.

The strike of press agency workers on 01.10.2015 was judged illegal on the grounds that these constitute 'utilities'.

With the intervention of employers, two trade unionists were arrested for picketing the strike at the poultry farms in Schimatari.

Similar developments are taking place in other EU countries: demonstrations have been banned in Italy and restrictions imposed on the right to strike in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

The European Union argues that trade union legislation falls outside its remit, even though the 'Memoranda' signed by successive Greek governments provide for curbs on trade union freedoms and the right to strike.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

- How does it view the interventions in trade union law initiated by the SYRIZA - ANEL government in signing the third 'Memorandum' that are aimed at suppressing trade union rights and striking a blow at the right to strike?