

Question for written answer E-003095/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)

Subject: The strike by railway workers in France

Railway workers in France, with solidarity from numerous unions in France and other countries, are striking to protest against the French President Emmanuel Macron's plan to convert the railway into an anonymous share company and against the blow to labour rights (lifting of permanent employment status, agreements under private law, reductions in wages and leave, rise in retirement age and others), which marks an overall attack on labour, eliminating collective labour agreements, flexible work and so on.

The deregulation of the transport industry and profit-based competition is being promoted with the European Union policy that includes their privatisation, as experience has shown in Greece under the SYRIZA-ANEL government.

Aside from infringing upon labour rights, this policy places a financial burden on passengers as fares rise, additionally burdens the people with the company's debts, and leads to a dangerous deterioration of safety conditions in transport in the interest of restricting costs, as demonstrated by the experience of privatising the British railways and the death of more than 70 people after privatisation, according to the 'Cheminots de Versailles' railway union.

Can the Commission say:

What position does it take on the French workers' demands:

- for the withdrawal of the Macron law, for not converting the railway to a share company, and in general for not deregulating transport?
- for contracting workers to be hired with full rights?
- for a collective labour agreement that safeguards all current labour rights, and improves working hours and wages?