



# THESES

OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE  
ON THE 21ST CONGRESS

**THIRD**

**TEXT**

## INTRODUCTION

**1** The 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the KKE came to main conclusions with regards to the struggle for the regroupment of the labour–trade union movement and the Party construction in the working class. At the same time, it defined directions and tasks for the following years and scheduled a nationwide conference for the monitoring of the implementation of the Political Resolution. The CC failed to hold the Nationwide Conference on the work in the working class, although the activity of the Party since the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress has accumulated new data. Thus, the work targeted at the working class and its movement remains an important topic of discussion at the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress.

The Programme of the KKE stresses that the activity of the Party under non-revolutionary conditions contributes decisively to the preparation of the subjective factor —the Party, the working class and its alliances— for the revolutionary conditions and the realization of its strategic tasks. It is highlighted that the attraction of vanguard sections of the working class and the mobilization of its majority with the KKE will go through various phases. The labour movement, the movements of urban self-employed and of farmers, and the form of expression of their alliance through anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly goals, through the vanguard action of the KKE forces under non-revolutionary conditions constitute the first form of the workers' and people's front in revolutionary conditions.

Several important issues regarding the role of the KKE in the labour and people's movement were also raised in the Resolution of the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress . Therefore, the CC concluded to this text that needs to be discussed inside our party and the KNE, undoubtedly in combination with the other two texts that have already been published.

We intend to discuss the new conditions and to identify strengths and subjective weaknesses that need to be addressed, in order to match our action with the demands arising from the needs of the working class and the other popular strata, from the goals we have set.

The first issue we examine is the basic trends in the class structure of Greek society as well as the current condition of the working class, ten years after the outbreak of the previous deep capitalist economic crisis. We examine the working class by analyzing the conditions that were —and are— formed in its work and life, overall the terms of sale of labour power, and the forms of intensification of its exploitation. We identify negative changes and how they affect its unity and joint struggle, the formation of class consciousness, its stance towards bourgeois governments that manage the crisis to the detriment of workers' interests.

The second key issue we examine is the current condition of the labour–trade union movement, the degree of organization of the working class into trade unions and its participation in class struggle. We discuss the conclusions drawn from the struggles and efforts to create vanguard seedbeds of resistance and struggle at workplaces. We highlight the low degree of organization of the working class, which is an all-time low. We identify the objective reasons for people's difficulty to join the unions as well as our own weaknesses, especially our tasks to change these conditions, to set goals more decisively, in order to achieve, if possible, an impetuous development of organization and participation in trade unions. We discuss the course of PAME as a class-oriented rally of federations, labour centres, and trade unions in the line of struggle towards an anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly direction. At the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress we concluded that PAME is a great achievement.

The third issue we examine is the elaboration of the experience from the joint action of workers' unions and mass organizations of the lower strata of the urban self-employed and of the farmers, the elaboration of the effort to improve the preconditions for their social alliance. Two nationwide Party conferences on our work within the self-employed and the farmers have already been organized, which provide us with experience and elaborations for the fulfillment of this task of strategic importance for our Party. The working class is the leading force that will create the terms and conditions to forge the social alliance and to attract the allied social forces to increasingly more stable joint action, promoting a corresponding framework of struggle.

## Chapter A

### MAIN TRENDS IN THE CLASS STRUCTURE IN GREECE

**2** . We briefly examine some key trends in the development of the class structure in Greece in the past 20 years, with the central aim to better orientate the work of the Party towards the working class. The analytical study, which will be published in the near future, includes other aspects (e.g. relation between place of work and residence, educational level, age distribution) as well as theoretical and statistical processing, in order to determine more accurately the sections of wage labour belonging to or approaching the working class.

In particular, we examine some main trends in population growth, the economically active population as a percentage of the potentially economically active population, the employment change, basic elements in the sectoral distribution of employment and wage employment, data on the composition of the workforce by sex and age as well as data on employees' earnings.

For convenience, we quote the definitions of the bourgeois statistics we are using (as cited by the Hellenic Statistical Authority—ELSTAT):

**Employed person:** A person aged 15 and over who during the reference week performed work—even if just for one hour a week—for pay or profit, or worked in the family business. Alternatively, the person was not at work, but had a job as a salaried employee or as self-employed from which he or she was temporarily absent.

**Unemployed person:** A person aged between 15 and 74 who was not classified as employed (according to the previous definition), was immediately available to start work and was either actively seeking for employment in the past 4 weeks or had already found a job to start within the next three months.

**Economically inactive population:** Persons who are not classified as employed or unemployed.

**Economically active population (labour force/workforce):** The employed and the unemployed persons.

**Unemployment rate:** The ratio of the unemployed to the total workforce<sup>[1]</sup>.

<sup>[1]</sup> We are using the current ELSTAT definitions, which, in general, may differ from the corresponding definitions of previous periods.

### Population trend

**3** . The country's population has not changed significantly in the past 20 years. There was a slight increase during the period of capitalist development in 2000–2008 until the outbreak of the crisis in late 2008 and more clearly in 2009, rising from 10.8 million to 11 million in 2008, dropping again to 10.7 million in 2019.

A similar trend can be observed as regards the population aged 15–74 years, which increased slightly until the crisis and then shrank, dropping by 250,000 people in 2019 in comparison to 2000.

Population trends are similar in both sexes, but not the same. Both the male and female population increased by about 150,000 in the period 2000–2008, but the subsequent decline in the population is different in the two sexes: the female population dropped by 100,000 in the period 2008–2019 and the male population dropped further down by almost 250,000 in the same period.

The trends of population change from one region to another are significantly varied with regards to the whole country: there is a decrease of 6% in Attica, Western Greece and West Macedonia, an increase of about 4% in Crete and the South Aegean and an impressive increase of 11% at the North Aegean. Attica is home to 35% of the total population, followed by Central Macedonia (17%).

Regarding the age of the population, there is a significant increase in the average age in the past 20 years by 4 years, rising from 39.7 to 43.8, with the crisis accelerating an aging trend that pre-existed during the period of capitalist development in 2000–2008. At the same time, the age of the population shows great variations within the country. The aging of the population results from the combination of the chronic low fertility rates, the increase of life expectancy, and the large-scale emigration, mainly to EU countries, of younger and often more specialized workers, during (and after) the crisis of 2008–2015.

## Change in the economically active population and employment

**4** . The economically active population grew during the period 2000–2008 and then shrank (with a slower pace) during the period of the capitalist crisis in 2008–2015, as well as during the period of the weak economic recovery in 2015–2019. As a result, the economically active population in 2009 consisted of 4.7 million people; 2.1 million were women (45%) and 2.6 million were men (55%).

**TABLE 1**

Change in population and employment fundamentals (in millions)

	2000	2009	2015	2019
Potentially economically active population (15–74)	8.18	8.43	8.09	7.93
Economically active population	4.61	5.03	4.8	4.7
% active population	56.4%	59.7%	59.3%	59.5%
Employment	4.01	4.54	3.6	3.9
Unemployed	0.51	0.49	1.2	0.82

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)

During the past 20 years, the economically active population appears to be slightly increased in 2019 compared to 2000. The small increase is attributed to a significant increase in the number of employed women, by 265,000, and a decrease by 147,000 in the number of men. This trend is the outcome of different phenomena acting differently on the two sexes. During this period, there was a significant increase in the integration of women into the labour market. Moreover, the trend of immigrant workers abandoning Greece owing to the crisis was mainly observed among men. It is not clear if there is a sex-based differentiation on the number of Greeks emigrating abroad.

The contribution of people under 30 years old in the economically active population was diminished from 1.2 million in 2000 to 707 thousand in 2019. The contribution of middle-aged people in the economically active population grew during the 2000–2008 period, it remained constant until 2015 and afterwards it decreased slightly. The contribution of older people in the economically active population keeps growing.

**TABLE 2**

Contribution by sex and age group in the economically active population as a percent of the total population of each sex in the particular age group

Sex	Age	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
Women	35–54	56.9%	66.2%	70.2%	74.8%	75.3%
Women	>55	19.6%	21.4%	25.6%	25.5%	31.2%
Women	15–34	51.5%	55.1%	55.1%	56.4%	52.2%
Men	35–54	94.6%	96.9%	94.3%	95.1%	95.0%
Men	>55	46.3%	53.8%	54.4%	48.5%	56.3%
Men	15–34	63.8%	64.6%	64.6%	62.7%	58.2%

Source: ELSTAT, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The increase in the total population does contribute in the overall increase of the economically active population, albeit this fact is not sufficient to explain other important changes. The crisis of 2008–2015 accelerated the already increasing contribution of people from 35 to 54 years in the economically active population. This is attributed mainly to the increasing integration of women into the labour market and the increased retirement ages. On the other hand, there is a decreasing trend in the participation of younger ages, attributed mainly to the increasing number of years spent in tertiary education, as well as to emigration. Emigration currents were particularly strong during the 2008–2015 period.

As can be seen in Table 2, the increasing contribution of women in the economically active population is evident in the past 20 years (there is an increase of 18.5 percentage points in the ages 35–54 and an increase of 11 percentage points in the >55 age group). Furthermore, there was an increase (of 10 percentage points) in the contribution of men

>55, whereas in the age group 15–34 the participation decreased by 5.6 percentage points.

The increase of the economically active population in the past 20 years did not lead to an increase in employment. The outbreak of the crisis brought about a significant drop in employment. During the 2008–2013 period, there was a “sudden” decrease of 1.1 million employed persons. Due to this fact, the number of employed persons in 2013 dropped to 3.51 million. During the 2013–2014 period, the number of employed persons remained constant, while from 2015 onwards there was a gradual increase in employment until the outbreak of the crisis in 2020. The recovery trend in employment is accompanied by changes in the sex and age structure. The relative increase in employment is driven mainly by older people and women. The increase of the average age of employed persons, reflecting an “aging” workforce, is mainly due to the emigration of a younger workforce, the increased duration of studies and the increase in the retirement age. The increased participation of women in the workforce is clearly distinguishable.

### Changes in the class structure of employment The period from the weak recovery to the new crisis

**5**. During the period from 2015 to 2019, there were relatively small changes in the composition of employment, even though the consequences of the new synchronized crisis have not been fully incorporated into the statistics yet. During this period, employed persons increased by approximately 300 thousand, reaching 3.9 million. This increase was almost entirely driven by an increase in the number of salaried employees, the number of which grew from 2.35 to 2.66 million. The number of self-employed without employees decreased slightly from 856 to 834 thousand. The trend of significant reinforcement of wage labour is clear. Salaried employees account for 68% of employed persons, compared to 65 % in 2015. The total number of salaried employees has not yet reached the level of 2009, however, it is bouncing back, while the number of self-employed keeps decreasing. At the same time, the crisis and recovery period have led to a significant increase in the concentration of the working class in larger enterprises, as indicated by the information published by both the ELSTAT and the ERGANI (Information System of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs). However, there is still a large number of salaried employees in small and very small enterprises.

**TABLE 3**

Class structure of employment (in mil.)

	2000	2009	2015	2019	2020
Economically active population	4.61	5.03	4.8	4.72	4.61
Employed persons	4.01	4.54	3.6	3.9	3.8
Salaried employees	2.38	2.95	2.35	2.66	2.61
Self-employed	0.989	0.965	0.856	0.834	0.82
Employers	0.33	0.377	0.285	0.289	0.288
Unemployed persons	0.51	0.49	1.2	0.82	0.78

Source: ELSTAT, LFS

The statistical data are not complete for 2020 and the situation becomes more complicated owing to the measures of the “emergency situation” of the pandemic.

During the 2009–2019 period, which includes both the crisis and the recovery, the main developments in the structure of employment were:

The reduction in the total number of employed persons by 640 thousand.

The relatively smaller decrease in the total number of salaried employees. Their number decreased by 290 thousand —with uneven distribution across different sectors— with an increase in their percent contribution in employment and a significant increase in the number of unemployed persons. It should be highlighted that not all salaried employees belong to the working class. This is because, under the umbrella term “salaried employees” there are, among others, sections of the bourgeoisie (senior managers), salaried employees in the armed and security forces, and strata with an intermediate function in the supervision and management of enterprises (in previous Party documents they were called “new

middle strata of salaried employees”). On the other hand, salaried employees working as freelance service providers are not included in the total number of salaried employees, as they are considered to be self-employed. However, these methodological challenges do not alter the general trend. The number of self-employed and employers reflects the contradictory trends within capitalism. On one hand, they are getting destroyed owing to the concentration and centralization of capital. On the other hand, there is a relative re-emergence of new self-employed and employers, as an integral part of capitalist recovery, which slows down the tendency of shrinkage of the number of self-employed and employers. During the 2009–2020 period, there was a decrease in the number of self-employed and employers by 130 and 90 thousand respectively, even though the past three years there is a slight increase in the number of self-employed by 15 thousand (which, however, does not concern the urban self-employed, whose number decreased in the corresponding period).

**TABLE 4**

Distribution of employment per region (2019)

	Contributing family workers	Salaried employees	Self-employed*	Total
Attica	10,340	1,159,136	272,889	1,442,366
North Aegean	3,590	42,502	28,724	74,816
South Aegean	5,305	89,995	37,675	132,974
Crete	10,729	161,613	80,643	252,982
East Macedonia and Thrace	9,911	127,724	77,010	214,649
Central Macedonia	17,496	425,572	199,623	642,690
West Macedonia	1,875	51,494	33,713	87,082
Epirus	3,636	70,245	38,871	112,750
Thessaly	21,040	143,201	89,007	253,249
Ionian Islands	4,169	47,215	25,805	77,189
Western Greece	15,858	114,054	84,770	214,681
Central Greece	6,489	120,137	67,543	194,170
Peloponnese	12,996	110,638	87,799	211,432

\* It refers to self-employed with and without employees.

Source: Eurostat

The distribution of the workforce varies significantly per region, with the percent of wage employment to be significantly higher in Attica (approaching 80%), whereas in Peloponnese and Western Greece is just slightly over 50%, owing to the large percent of self-employed persons working in agricultural production.

### Sectoral changes in the structure of the economy

**6**. A detailed analysis of the sectoral structure of the economy goes certainly beyond the “narrow” scope of analyzing its class structure, which is the aim of this study. However, it is ultimately impossible to fully analyse changes in the social structure if we don’t analyse sides of the economic structure.

Class structure differs between various sectors of the economy, and analyzing the sectoral structure of economy contributes to the analysis of the overall structure. The organic composition of capital differs vastly between sectors and as a result so does the number of workers per sector. The importance of sectors, from the point of view of their role in constituting social capital, that is their role in reproducing capital, does not only depend on the number of persons employed in different sectors but also on the proportion of capital employed and its strategic importance in production. As Marx demonstrated, capital exploits the collective labourer and surplus value —transferred between sectors— is distributed in proportion to the capital employed. This is after all the fundamental reason why measuring the degree of exploitation at a mere “sectoral” level is impossible.



The highlighting of sectors of the economy which are important in the reproduction of the total social capital is a decisive factor in the deployment of the Party forces, without disregarding the importance of sectors with a high concentration of the working class.

**TABLE 5**

Gross value added (GVA) per economic sector as a percentage (%) of the total GVA

	2000	2008	2017
Agriculture	6.1	3.2	4.2
Mining and Quarrying	0.5	0.4	0.5
Manufacturing	10.6	9.6	10.8
Electricity supply	1.6	1.1	2.0
Water supply	1.3	1.6	1.5
Construction	7.0	5.0	2.4
Wholesale and Retail trade	16.3	12.9	10.5
Transportation and Storage	6.7	8.2	7.0
Hospitality–Tourism	4.6	5.5	6.8
Information and Communication	3.9	3.8	3.5
Financial activities	4.6	4.4	4.1
Real Estate activities	11.0	13.2	17.1
Scientific activities	4.8	6.4	5.2
Public administration	8.1	9.0	10.2
Education	4.5	5.6	5.7
Healthcare	4.5	6.0	4.4
Arts	1.2	1.4	1.3
Other service activities	2.2	2.1	2.5
Activities of Households as employers	0.6	0.6	0.3

The sum of the percentages does not equal 100% as some of the smaller sectors have been omitted. The sectors are presented according to bourgeois statistics. The Real estate sector, which has the highest percentage of GVA, includes imputed income (rent, owner-occupied housing).

Source: ELSTAT

Even though the statistics cited in table 5 are problematic (e.g. sectoral classification, wrong calculation of GVA), they illuminate certain trends:

The sectors that generally do not produce new value have an important contribution to GDP in the national economy, with a percentage of 40%, which in 2017 reached 42%. Furthermore, this shifted toward the sectors of Public Administration (from 8.1% to 10.2%) and Real Estate (from 11% to 17%, one of the highest percentages in the EU), whilst the contribution of Trade (which includes certain activities that do produce value) decreased (from 16.3% to 10.5%).

The Manufacturing sector is still the one producing the most value, having currently a higher contribution than Trade, without however showing a substantial upward trend as a percentage of GDP. Nonetheless, this stability obscures some great internal restructuring in the sector. Specifically, the subsector of Food and Beverage almost doubled in Gross Value Added and increased its contribution to the overall GVA of manufacturing in 2017 from 22% to 33%. The subsector of Basic Metal Production also substantially increased its contribution to GVA from 14% to 20% of the overall GVA of manufacturing. On the other hand, traditional sectors of domestic manufacturing became obsolete. The Clothing and Footwear industry as well as the Pulp and Paper industry both shrank from 10% each to 2.5–3%. The growth of the Chemical industry was accompanied by a shrinkage of the

Plastics industry.

Furthermore, the GVA data shows the substantial shrinkage of Construction.

In sectors with a large number of workers there is a shift from Trade to the Hospitality–Tourism sector, which corresponds to an important increase of imported tourism, but also to the growth of the hospitality sector itself.

The Hospitality–Tourism sector represents a relatively low contribution of 6.5% to GVA, in which, however, unreported income and the so-called “shadow economy” need to be factored.

### Sectoral changes in employment and wage employment

**7**. The period 2009–2019, which includes the multi-annual phase of the crisis and the short-term phase of anaemic recovery, records the development of employment in various sectors in differing ways.

**TABLE 6**

Employment per sector (in thousands)

	2009	2015	2019
Agriculture	532.9	465.7	453.6
Mining	14.2	10.4	12.5
Manufacturing	518.8	334.5	377.1
Electricity supply	28.5	26.3	29.6
Water supply	30.5	23.1	33.1
Construction	370.7	145.2	147.6
Trade	827.7	660.8	691.9
Transportation	217.0	168.3	206.8
Hospitality–Tourism	320.9	325.5	381.9
Information and Communication	87.6	72.9	102.2
Financial activities	114.6	88.2	84.2
Real Estate	8.5	6.0	5.0
Scientific and Technical Services	234.8	208.6	218.2
Administrative Service activities	75.1	85.5	90.9
Public Sector	377.1	312.7	341.5
Education	328.7	294.0	320.9
Healthcare	234.4	214.2	248.4
Arts	54.0	45.2	53.7
Other service activities	88.6	74.4	82.6
Households	89.8	46.9	25.0
Various Organizations	1.6	2.1	4.3

Source: ELSTAT

**TABLE 7**

Class distribution of employment per sector, 2019 (in thousands)

	Salariated employees	Self-employed	Employers	Total	% salariated employees
Public Administration	341.5	0	0	341.5	100.00
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	4.3	0	0	4.3	100.00



Mining and Quarrying	12.1	0	0.4	12.5	96.65
Water supply, sewerage, waste management	31.8	0.7	0.6	33.1	96.04
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	28.1	1.4	0.1	29.6	94.92
Education	291.8	16.4	12.6	320.9	90.93
Information and Communication	89.3	3.5	9.2	102.2	87.46
Financial and Insurance activities	72.9	9.0	2.0	84.2	86.54
Activities of households as employers	21.6	3.4	0	25.0	86.52
Administrative and Support service activities	74.6	6.5	7.1	90.9	81.99
Human health and social work activities	200.4	36.6	11.0	248.4	80.66
Manufacturing	302.4	38.5	26.4	377.1	80.2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	40.1	8.6	4.1	53.7	74.6
Accommodation and Food Service activities	271.9	34.3	50.9	381.9	71.22
Transportation and Storage	145.8	48.4	11.0	206.8	70.46
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	444.3	146.7	76.4	691.9	64.22
Other service activities	51.5	21.0	8.9	82.6	62.38
Construction	89.0	40.7	15.9	147.6	60.29
Real Estate	2.5	1.2	0.8	5.0	49.12
Professional, scientific and technical activities	97.3	96.2	23.3	218.2	44.58
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	50.4	316.4	34.0	453.6	11.12

Source: ELSTAT

**TABLE 8**

Wage employment (in thousands)

	2009	2015	2019
Agriculture	38.5	46.0	50.4
Mining	15.6	9.3	12.1
Manufacturing	403.7	25.1	302.4
Electricity supply	33.9	25.1	28.1

Water supply	29.6	22.3	31.8
Construction	279.7	86.7	89.0
Trade	451.9	395.4	444.3
Transportation	154.0	117.6	145.8
Hospitality–Tourism	186.8	212.9	271.9
Information and Communication	69.5	66.0	89.3
Financial activities	109.4	75.5	72.9
Real Estate	1.5	2.6	2.5
Scientific and Technical activities	110.6	92.5	97.3
Administrative support services	63.7	69.6	74.6
Public Sector	379.5	312.7	341.5
Education	298.8	270.7	291.8
Healthcare	199.1	168.3	200.4
Arts	43.1	34.3	40.1
Other service activities	54.1	43.6	51.5
Households	71.5	44.3	21.6
Various Organisations	1.7	1.9	4.3
Employed persons, total	2,996.2	2,348.5	2,663.5

Source: ELSTAT, LFS

The changes during the period between 2009–2019 in the largest sectors can be found in:

The Manufacturing sector, where the employed persons (total) decreased from 520 thousand in 2009 to 377 thousand in 2020. In the same period, wage employment was reduced significantly less, from 404 thousand to 302 thousand persons. The percentage of wage employment in manufacturing is over 80%.

Employment in the Construction sector, which was reduced considerably from 307 thousand persons in 2009 to 145 thousand persons in 2019, concerning mainly the number of salaried employees, which was reduced from 280 thousand to 89 thousand.

Employment in the Transportation and Storage sector, which was slightly reduced from 216 thousand to 209 thousand persons, while wage employment was reduced from 155 thousand to 145 thousand persons.

Employment in the Scientific and Technical activities sector, which was slightly reduced from 240 to 200 thousand persons in 2019, while wage employment in those services appeared to be reduced from 112 to 97 thousand persons. However, we note that a considerable part of salaried employees of this sector is recorded as self-employed (freelance service providers) and this employment relationship was considerably expanded during this period.

Employment in the Education sector, which remained stable, from 329 to 321 thousand persons, while wage employment in this sector was also slightly reduced, from 298 to 292 thousand persons, although we note the presence of considerable unreported employment of both self-employed and salaried employees.

Employment in the Healthcare sector, which increased slightly, from 234.4 thousand persons in 2009 to 248.4 thousand persons in 2019. Wage employment was increased to 200 thousand persons.

Employment in the Hospitality–Tourism sector, which increased from 320 to 380 thousand persons. The increase concerns the salaried employees in the sector, while employment other than those was reduced. The percentage of wage employment in Hospitality–Tourism was increased reaching 71% in 2019 compared to 60% in 2009.

Employment in the Trade sector, which was reduced from 830 to 700 thousand persons,

while wage employment was reduced slightly, by about 15 thousand persons, with the percentage of wage employment increasing and reaching 64%.

It is also noted that the so-called “civil servants” —which include employees in Public Administration, Healthcare, Education, Security Forces, etc.— were 517 thousand in 2019, slightly up compared to 2015 when they were 567 thousand, with a small reduction in number compared to 2013, when they were 603 thousand. The relative stabilization of the number of employees obscures relative changes in their composition. Specifically, employees in education were reduced from 178 thousand in 2013 to 164 thousand in 2019, while employees in the security forces increased from 63 thousand to 68 thousand in the same period.

**TABLE 9**

Concentration of salaried employees (in thousands)

	Total	< 10	10 to 19	20 to 49	> 50	Unknown	> 10 Salaried employees, total	Salaried employees < 10
2019	3,911.0	2,132.7	379.4	347.2	691.1	360.8	2,787.0	1,043.3
2015	3,610.7	2,171.8	357.0	268.0	504.4	309.4	2,506.4	1,097.3
2009	4,556.0	2,887.9	470.2	333.3	476.6	387.9	3,215.1	1,592.3
2000	4,088.5	2,710.1	448.3	306.5	402.7	220.9	2,768.4	1,429.6

Calculation of salaried employees utilizing ELSTAT data.

The calculation of the number of salaried employees is approximate and was calculated by subtracting the number of self-employed and employers from that of employed persons (total). The data show a methodological differentiation from the EFKA (Unified Social Security Fund) census data, since EFKA data record monthly employment, while ELSTAT data do so yearly.

*Source: ELSTAT, LFS*

As regards the concentration of salaried employees, the totality of data reflects an increasing trend in larger enterprises, although the number of salaried employees in small enterprises continues to remain high.

**TABLE 10**

Classification of enterprises according to the number of salaried employees

Size	Enterprises	Salaried employees
<10	234,313	622,959
>10	41,289	1,769,901
Total	284,602	2,392,860

The EFKA data show employment on a monthly basis and not on a six-month one.

*Source: EFKA, August 2019*

A relative differentiation between the EFKA (Unified Social Security Fund) and ELSTAT data becomes apparent. Specifically, the EFKA data show about 300–400 thousand fewer workers in enterprises with fewer than 10 employees (630 thousand according to EFKA, 1,043 million according to our estimation based on ELSTAT data). We note that the difference of approximately 300 thousand is also shown in the total estimation of the number of salaried employees between EFKA and ELSTAT (2.39 million according to EFKA and 2.66 million according to ELSTAT), a difference concerning almost exclusively small enterprises with fewer than 10 employees. For enterprises with more than 10 employees, EFKA shows 1.77 million employees and our estimation based on ELSTAT data is 1.74 million. We have well-founded reasons to assume that this differentiation relates to the manner of classification of the unemployed. EFKA calculates the unemployed on a monthly basis, while ELSTAT does so on a six-month basis. Finally, the EFKA data depict the situation mainly from the point of view of the capital —how many persons are working in a given month— while the ELSTAT data do so mainly from the point of view of the salaried employees —in which sector the salaried employee has worked for the last six months.

Of course, the ELSTAT data obscure the size of unemployment, but for the purpose of estimating the structure of the working class, it is rather more indicative.

In any case, we can estimate that, despite the trend towards the concentration in larger enterprises, there remain a large number of salaried employees in small enterprises. The percentage of salaried employees in enterprises with more than 50 employees increased from 14% in 2009 to 25% in 2019, while the percentage of salaried employees in enterprises with fewer than 10 employees decreased from 50% in 2009 to 37% in 2019. Despite all this, approximately 1 million salaried employees remain in enterprises with fewer than 10 employees.

## CHAPTER B

### THE INFLUENCE OF BOURGEOIS POLICY IN THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASS. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EU POLICY

**8**. The implementation of EU directives in order to ensure cheap labour power, the expansion of flexible working arrangements, and the strengthening of the contributory principle as well as the involvement of the private sector in the social security system, worsened the negative impacts on the condition of the working class which derive from the function of capitalist economy (especially since the outbreak of the crisis in 2008 and 2020).

These policies are documented in the Europe 2020 strategy and they are coordinated by the “European Semester”, which also monitors these policies in each Member State. EU officials are developing the policies to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in conjunction with the governments of the Member States.

The general trend toward increasing the exploitation of workers remains stable, even after the change in fiscal policy and the adoption of greater state intervention in order to manage the new international economic crisis.

Some state measures, which aim to retain a basic level of working-class consumption, to avoid a mass destruction of the self-employed, and an extensive increase in unemployment and extreme poverty, are temporary and their burden will eventually fall on workers and pensioners over the coming years, in order to pay for the new government loans.

In this direction, the EU, promoting the so-called “European Pillar of Social Rights”, presents the further shrinkage of the price of labour power as “securing a minimum”, flexible working as “work–life balance”, and the privatization of healthcare as “affordable healthcare”. These constitute strategic anti-labour goals of capital, which attempts to condemn to destitution the working class and the poor popular strata.

The National Reform Programmes (NRPs) constitute a fundamental tool for the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy at a national level, they are drawn up by national governments, and they are submitted around mid-April every year along the Stability and Convergence Programmes (SCPs).

NRPs include national goals, which are aligned with the fundamental goals of the EU, their implementation progress, and the measures which will be taken in order to achieve them.

A fundamental direction of the Europe 2020 strategy is to support new investments, the “utilization of new sources of growth”, giving priority to high-tech sectors. This strategy constantly develops with new anti-labour reforms.

They estimate that “new communication technologies and flexible working can often lead to increased working hours and an overlap between work, privacy, and personal time”.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Enhanced Surveillance Report on Greece by the European Commission (November 2019) as well as all the previous ones insist on an intensifying escalation of anti-popular reforms which aim to increase the competitiveness of the capital. It is revealed that the government has agreed to complete an “ex-post evaluation” of the minimal increase which was achieved in February 2019 in collaboration with the World Bank, which will offer “technical support” to monitor developments in the labour market. Furthermore, the fact that the targets for the primary surpluses were surpassed is evaluated positively.

At the same time, the European Commission focuses on expanding the tax base for ENFIA (single property tax) and other property taxes, which essentially are a series of heavy taxes burdening the working class, like taxes on parental grants, inheritance,

conveyance deeds, and the property tax (TAP) which is paid to local authorities (OTA) through electricity bills.

Already since the 90s, there was a trend among nearly all EU member states towards abolishing national and industry-level collective agreements in favour of enterprise-level agreements or individual contracts. Almost identical interventions took place in the collective agreements of three southern European countries (Spain, Portugal, Greece) with similar characteristics.

The above-mentioned factors objectively influence the unity and consciousness of the working class.

A large proportion of current workers joined the production or reached a productive age after 2009, and therefore has not experienced the rights and achievements which existed before the capitalist economic crisis, and even more before the overthrow of socialism. This fact contributes to a lowering of struggle and demands for an improved standard of living, and to a compromising attitude toward the current state of employment relations.

### INTENSIFICATION OF EXPLOITATION, PROMOTION OF “FLEXIBLE LABOUR RELATIONS”

**9**. The measures that governments have taken and continue to take over the years from 2010 until today have debilitated a series of labour achievements aiming at the reduction of wages in both the private and the public sector, at making labour relations more flexible. Legislative provisions that deregulated labour rights were actualized, such as:

- Abolition of the Sunday holiday.

- Conversion of full-time contracts to part-time.

- Imposition of rotating employment and contingent labour.

- Facilitation of collective redundancies.

- Reduction of overtime and additional work pay.

- Legalization of the indirect lockout, of payroll lockout.

- Restrictions on strike ballot in the primary trade unions, since a 50% + 1 majority is required in the respective General Assemblies for the formation of a quorum.

The main axes and consequences of the bourgeois policies of restructuring in Greece are:

a) The establishment of flexible work combined with the downgrading and weakening of Collective Agreements, low wages, high unemployment, increased undeclared work, unpaid work with delays in the payment of already done work from 3 to 15 months, have finalized an occupational jungle. At the same time, Occupational Health and Safety conditions are almost non-existent, occupational accidents and diseases are on the rise and have a significant impact on workers' health.

In the annual report of the European Central Bank (ECB) in 2017, the measures that contributed to the growth of employment are specifically named “these (...) which increase labour market flexibility by loosening employment protection, for example by reducing severance payments or making wages more flexible”. The ECB also notes that “the experience of the crises has shown that more flexible economies are more resilient to shocks and tend to experience faster recoveries and higher long-term growth”.

The European trade-unions-turned-bourgeois accept in practice the greater flexibility of working time, e.g. the collective agreement signed by the Metal Trade Union IG Metall in Germany for “voluntary” part-time employment of 28 hours per week for up to two years for employees who have to provide care for young children, the elderly or the sick, under the burden of the shortage of adequate and free health and welfare facilities and services.

The promotion of flexible labour relations, especially among working women, used the objective difficulty of working mothers to combine work with the “individual responsibility” for the care of children, elderly parents, and family, due to the lack of social structures.

According to the reports of the ERGANI, it is observed that part-time employees in the private sector are gradually increasing, from 40.9% in 2017 to 42.53% in 2019, a trend that halted in the first semester of 2020.

**TABLE 11**

	Full-time employment	Part-time employment	Rotating employment
2020 (Semester A)	50.19% (426,847)	39.76% (338,098)	10.05% (85,456)
2019	45.12% (1,277,396)	42.53% (1,203,794)	12.35% (349,695)
2018	45.66% (1,218,566)	41.60% (1,110,239)	12.74% (340,118)
2017	45.13% (1,083,418)	40.90% (981,758)	13.97% (335,222)

The data illustrate the effect of anti-labour laws on the change in the ratio between full-time to part-time employment in the total of new recruitments, compared to 2015 (full-time employment 54.47%), where the new legislative acts had not yet had a significant effect.

b) The abolition of the list of “unhealthy and arduous occupations” in a number of sectors has led to at least 10 more years of work, eliminating the five-year difference in the retirement age between men and women and levelling any favourable provisions and regulations that applied to women in the name of gender equality. The laws that crush every notion of social security, equalize the retirement age limits that reached 67 years for both sexes, and literally abolish maternity protection. They abolished the right to early retirement of mothers with underage children, family members with disabilities, etc. We should note that in Greece there is no official statistical record of the frequency and severity index of occupational accidents. However, even the simple recording of the number of occupational accidents reflects the deterioration of the situation (from 3,762 in 2013 to 5,330 in 2018). Occupational disease registration also remains virtually non-existent.

c) Due to the adopted laws, the implementation of the mandatory character and the generalization of the collective agreements have been suspended.

The majority of individual contracts convert the employment relationship from full-time to part-time or rotating, with the latter showing an overall increase of 201.95% between 2009–2016. The percentage increase by 790.69% of the forced—unilaterally by the employer— conversions of individual employment contracts into rotating employment is even more impressive.

Concomitantly, freelance service providing has been extended, which includes a large number of salaried employees without the right to leave (maternity leave, holiday leave, etc.), unemployment benefits, severance and overtime pay, protection from occupational accidents and diseases, etc.

In 2018, 10 collective agreements were declared mandatory, that concern only 10% of all employees (tourism–hotels, banks, shipping and travel agencies). The “expansion” of industry-level collective agreements, even in the few sectors that these are underway or to be initiated, leaves out thousands of employees working under a “flexibility” regime, and in terms of their content, these contracts include major pay cuts and suspension of rights. At the same time, it is legally possible for many enterprises to not implement them.

On the other hand, for many years there have been no industrial-based collective agreements in major sectors of the economy, such as in Trade, the Food Industry, Metal, Pharmaceuticals, Construction, etc.

d) The bourgeois planning for the escalation of the anti-labour attack in the next five years is reflected in the projections of the Pissarides Report which prescribes:

- The determination of the minimum wage by decision of a council of experts, without the consent of the trade union movement.
- The deregulation of employment protection against redundancies by removing the existing restrictions on changing the number of employees.
- The abolition of surcharges for overtime work for the benefit of the monopoly groups.
- The merger and decoupling of the allowances from the amount of the minimum wage with the aim of substantially reducing their amount.

## WAGES AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORKING CLASS



**10** . The statistics on wages provided by EFKA illustrate a highly significant pay differentiation among salaried employees for 2019. Some key conclusions are:

Wage distribution shows a concentration of employees with wages around 400 euros and another concentration of employees with wages around 1,000 euros, with the former representing precarious workers (part-time employment etc.) and the latter concentration of employees representing full-time employees. To a large extent, this wage differentiation reflects the different industrial relations.

Women show a higher concentration in the first category relative to men and generally, in terms of “proportionality”, women’s wages are significantly lower than men’s wages. Women with wages under 500 euros represent 1/4, whereas men 1/5.

**TABLE 12**

Cumulative percentages by gross wage levels for men and women, as a percentage of salaried employee pay (men and women respectively) of up to 2,500 euros.

To	% Men	% Women
250	9.59	10.37
500	21.61	25.46
750	38.57	46.58
1,000	60.60	65.68
1,250	75.51	80.36
1,500	85.18	89.37
1,750	91.01	94.12
2,000	95.01	96.98
2,250	97.88	98.78
2,500	100.00	100.00

Each row contains the percentage of salaried employees with wages up to the gross wage given, e.g. 60.6% of men and 65.7% of women are paid a gross wage of 1,000 euros. It follows from the table that  $(95.91\% - 60.6\%) = 35.3\%$  of men and  $(96.98\% - 65.68\%) = 31.3\%$  of women are paid a wage of 1,000–2,000 euros. The corresponding percentages for wages of 1,000–1,500 euros are 24.6% for men and 23.7% for women, whereas for wages of 1,500–2,000 the percentages are 9.7% and 7.6%. This reflects the fact that the differentiation between men’s and women’s percentages within each wage category generally widens as wage increases. This differentiation reflects, to a certain extent, the increased representation of women in low-wage sectors, in low-skilled positions and shorter working hours, but also the higher rates of long-term unemployment of women.

*Source: EFKA*

It is worth noting that in spite of the differences, 35.1% of all men and 31.3% of all women salaried employees are paid a wage of 1,000–2,000 euros.

The substantial differences in the average wage of men and women reflect the higher part-time employment of women as a factor of particular importance, the higher participation of men in high wages, but also a general trend of lower wages in women that persists, even if less acute than in the past. The lower participation of older women in the economically active population is also a contributing factor.

The minimum wage for full-time employment seems to be, especially for women, “a safety net” that holds back the wage for the bracket of employees in full-time employment. The “distribution” of wages shows that if there was no minimum wage, a “spreading” of employees to lower wages (the “natural” maximum of the distribution seems to be 100 euros higher than minimum wage) would appear.

There is a significant wage differentiation for employees in full-time work, with the relative differentiation in men being more pronounced than the differentiation in women. Indicatively, 29% of the employees work part-time and earn an average wage of 375.53 euros (in 2010 the corresponding percentage did not exceed 15% with a wage of 562 euros). 71% of employees work full time earning a net average wage of 1,111.09 euros (compared to 1,394 euros in 2010).

For employees with a wage between 800–2,500 euros, as shown in the table, the ratios of men and women are much more uniform, with men having a slightly higher wage. At the same time, women in full-time jobs seem to be “pushed” more towards minimum wage, in the lower full-time wage bands.

Regarding wage progression: the average gross wage is reduced and stands at 960.93 euros (compared to 1,253 euros in 2010). The percentage of employees with net earnings below 1,000 euros has significantly increased, while more than 1 in 4 employees are paid the minimum wage.

87% of male salaried employees are paid a wage below 1,500 euros and 8% a wage from 1,500 to 2,500, while the corresponding percentages for women are 94% and 4%. These data are indicative for upper limits only.

Fully indicative of the large sectoral differentiations in the wage size is the size of the average gross wage (even if the concept of average hides the large differentiations) together with the employee contributions in certain sectors as recorded in EFKA data:

- ▶Maritime Transport: 2,543 euros
- ▶Banking Services: 2,264 euros
- ▶Oil Production: 2,668 euros
- ▶Basic Metal Production : 1,597 euros
- ▶Construction: 1,018 euros
- ▶Food–Beverage: 1,043 euros
- ▶Retail Trade: 946 euros
- ▶Hospitality–Tourism: 699 euros
- ▶Other business activities: 1,081 euros

### **CAPITAL'S DEMANDS FOR ITS COMPLETE EXEMPTION FROM SOCIAL SECURITY**

## **11**

. The Katrougkalos Law (Law 4387/2016 named after the former Minister of Labour G. Katrougalos), which defines the terms of social security for the next 50 years, is of strategic importance for capital. Based on this law, the main pension was separated into national and contributory. It leads to the provision of the limited state pension, financed by general taxation, and to the withdrawal of its guarantee from the rest of the pension that was called contributory, thus opening the way for contributory principle, i.e. of private insurance.

This Law will be aggressively implemented by the New Democracy government, fortifying it with additional provisions and mainly by pursuing new regulations, in order to “legitimize” all the former setbacks sustained by the insured persons and pensioners and to expand private insurance. According to the Report of the State General Accounting Office that accompanied the “law–guillotine”, its implementation from its adoption in 2016 until the end of 2019 takes away from the insured people and the pensioners the amount of 8.2 billion euros!

The EU is promoting a policy “that aims at increasing the use of individual pensions in the EU”.

The individualization of pension provision has been set in motion, which refers to the loss of intergenerational solidarity and enhances the contributory principle and “individual responsibility” for the insurance of the worker and his family.

Pensions from the Public Social Security Systems are planned that lead literally to starvation, and pensions from funded systems, that is, private systems, either through Professional Association Funds or through private capitalist insurance providers.

The notion of individualization (individual employment contracts, individual insurance, etc.) is dangerous. It forces workers to abandon collective bargaining of the terms of the sale of labour power, to abandon collective social rights and the joint demands by the working class against the class of capitalists and their state.

The aims of this attack are:

To make workers stay in work for “a longer period”, so as to ensure the “viability” of the social security system, thus leading to a further increase of the current retirement age of 67 years for men and women.

The reduction of “non-wage labour cost”, as it is called by the capitalists and their governments, their parties, and the EU; because it is not a matter of cost. It comes about from the labour of the workers; it is part of the worker’s wage. This will take place with the

reduction of social security contributions.

The “minimization of cases of early retirement” (i.e. before the age of 67) that includes some jobs such as “unhealthy and arduous occupations”, issues like disability due to an accident, an occupational disease etc.

The ND government carries on, based on Katrougkalos Law, and promotes the social insurance system of “three pillars”, the World Bank model from the 1990s and following the overthrows in the countries where socialism was being built. A huge blow, if not the final, is given to the right to public Social Insurance, which is transformed into an “investment”, a personal risk and pursuit through gambling.

### UNEMPLOYMENT CHANGE

**12**. During the crisis that broke out in 2008, the number of those registered as unemployed from 485 thousand in 2009 skyrocketed in 2013, a peak year, to 1,330 million (+ 174%) and since then has remained stable above 1 million until 2017. Unemployment increased from 9.6% in 2010 to 27.5% in 2013, while it remained over 20% up to 2017. The increase in unemployment is general and concerns all categories, sex, age, education, and duration. At younger ages (15–39 years) the official unemployment rate, despite extensive emigration, reached 36% in 2013 and remains above 20% in 2019. At older ages (50+), whereas it was at 5% in 2009, it is consistently above 10% throughout the decade (it reached 19% in 2016 and 12% in 2019). The pool of the unemployed was supplied, in addition to mass dismissals, by the crumbling of the petty bourgeois strata. About 10% of the unemployed persons report each year that their previous employment was either their own enterprise or that they were contributing family workers.

**TABLE 13**  
10-year change in unemployment figures

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Economically active population	5,029.1	4,936.1	4,890.0	4,844.0	4,810.6	4,808.0	4,804.5	4,780.0	4,743.0	4,729.9
Unemployed persons	639.4	881.8	1,195.0	1,330.0	1,274.4	1,197.0	1,130.9	1,027.0	915.0	818.9
% Unemployment	12.7	17.9	24.4	27.5	26.5	24.9	23.5	21.5	19.3	17.3
Youth Unemployment	152.8	215.3	293.2	314.4	299.8	278.0	238.2	204.0	185.0	161.6
Long-term unemployed	285.2	435.1	706.2	892.7	936.8	875.0	813.9	747.2	643.7	574.4
Employees	4,389.8	4,054.3	3,695.0	3,513.0	3,536.2	3,611.0	3,673.6	3,753.0	3,828.0	3,911.0
Self-employed persons	1,314.0	1,246.2	1,169.0	1,128.0	1,105.8	1,104.0	1,108.7	1,131.0	1,142.0	1,124.1
Contributing family workers	248.9	221.7	185.3	171.8	166.1	158.0	143.7	147.4	140.1	123.4
Salariied employees	2,826.9	2,586.4	2,341.0	2,214.0	2,264.3	2,349.0	2,421.2	2,474.0	2,546.0	2,663.5
Permanent employment	2,470.7	2,281.5	2,103.0	1,990.0	2,000.1	2,068.0	2,149.7	2,192.0	2,259.0	2,330.6
Temporary Employment	356.2	304.9	238.3	224.1	264.2	281.0	271.6	282.7	287.4	333.0
Full-time Employment	4,103.4	3,775.6	3,405.0	3,214.0	3,200.6	3,267.0	3,310.5	3,383.0	3,476.0	3,550.4
Part-time Employment	286.4	278.7	289.7	299.3	335.7	343.0	363.1	369.2	352.5	360.6
Inactive Population	4,370.3	4,436.7	4,455.0	4,466.0	4,471.5	4,439.0	4,408.3	4,397.0	4,397.0	4,373.6
Population 15 years old and over (total)	9,399.4	9,372.8	9,345.0	9,310.0	9,282.1	9,247.0	9,212.8	9,177.0	9,140.0	9,103.5

Source: ELSTAT, LFS

The comparison of changes in employment and unemployment gives both an

indication of the levels of migration and undeclared work. About 225 thousand workers found themselves outside the labour market and shifted by 38 thousand to the inactive population, while 186 thousand shifted mainly to migration, either as emigrants or foreign workers returning home, and secondarily towards “off the books” labour.

In the past three years, during the period of the relative weak recovery of 2016–2019, both the number of the unemployed and that of the unemployment rate decline. The number of the unemployed decreased in 2019 by 312 thousand compared to 2016 (-27.6%), while the unemployment rate fell to 17.3%. The long-term unemployed decreased by 240 thousand. The decrease of the unemployed numbers is general and concerns all categories, sex, age, and education, while there are geographic regions, such as that of the Aegean and Crete, where unemployment in 2019 reached 10%; significantly lower than the national average. The reduction of unemployment, however, is not translated directly into an increase in employment, since the workforce appears to be decreasing. Part of the unemployed do not return to the labour market, either because they are retiring or because they are headed to undeclared work, while migration has also played an essential role.

### TRENDS IN SELF-EMPLOYMENT

**13** . Total self-employment, in the context of the Greek capitalist economy, shows trends of net reduction by 130 thousand from 2009 to 2019. However, the distribution between the self-employed in agricultural production and the reduction of the urban self-employed is unequal. During the past decade, a distinct decline of urban self-employed without employees was recorded. Nevertheless, their generally contradictory course, which is characterized by occasional recoveries and clear differences per sector, is not reversed. In parallel with the general trend of concentration and centralization, which objectively leads sectors of the self-employed to ruin, halting trends coexist that lead to the reproduction of parts self-employed in various sectors, depending on the development of the capitalist economy and the interventions of governmental and EU policy. These strata remain numerous; the percentage of very small enterprises and more specifically of self-employed without employees remains particularly large in Greece in relation to the average of the EU-28.

Negative-growth trends were registered, which concern only the period of crisis, as well as some more general negative-growth trends, which also concern the period of the capitalist recovery. The downward trend appears more constant in Commerce, Manufacturing and Construction; nonetheless these sectors still concentrate cumulatively over 220 thousand self-employed. After the phase of capitalist crisis, ups and downs were recorded in Tourism–Hospitality and Transport, while a rising trend is observed in self-employment in Science and Technology (despite the fact that in this category a wage relationship is hidden which is yet revealed through freelance service providing).

On the contrary, in the agricultural sector the number of people whose principal professional activity is farming (with or without employees) remains roughly constant. The part of the farmers that tries to endure as individual agricultural producers, comes up to 240 thousands of farmers, livestock breeders and fishermen. They correspond to 90% of agricultural holdings.

### Regional Population and Employment Structure

**14** . The trend shifts from one region to another differ significantly in relation to the whole country, with changes extending from 6% decrease in Attica, Western Greece and West Macedonia, to 4% increase in Crete and in South Aegean and an impressive 11% increase in the North Aegean, something that is perhaps related to refugee management. As regards the structure in the country, Attica concentrates 35% of the total population, followed by Central Macedonia which concentrates 17%.

**Table 14**

Population per region (in thousands) and changes during the decade

	2000	2008	2019	%* Change	** Total
Greece	10,775	11,060	10,724	-3.04	100.00
Attica	3,871	3,990	3,742	-6.22	34.89

North Aegean	196	198	221	11.62	2.06
South Aegean	305	329	344	4.56	3.21
Crete	575	613	634	3.43	5.91
East Macedonia and Thrace	582	605	599	-0.99	5.59
Central Macedonia	1,828	1,905	1,873	-1.68	17.47
West Macedonia	287	286	267	-6.64	2.49
Epirus	337	344	333	-3.20	3.11
Thessaly	739	743	718	-3.36	6.70
Ionian Islands	203	207	203	-1.93	1.89
Western Greece	707	693	655	-5.48	6.11
Central Greece	553	555	555	0.00	5.18
Peloponnese	585	585	574	-1.88	5.35

\* Percentage of change in 2008–2019.

\*\* Percentage of regional population to total population.

Source: ELSTAT

### THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN GREECE

**15** . The Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2019 reported 537,600 immigrants<sup>[1]</sup> in Greece, corresponding to 5.1% of the total population (showing a 32% decrease, compared to the 790,100 immigrants reported in the 2011 census). Despite the significant decrease reported between the 2019 LFS and the 2011 census, the distribution of immigrants per region according to the 2019 LFS is presented in Table 15, in order to examine certain trends.

According to data from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of asylum seekers and refugees reached 120,000 in the first semester of 2020. Approximately 33% of them are found in the islands and 67% in the mainland.

**TABLE 15**

Regional distribution of population per nationality (in thousands)

	Greek	EU	Other	% migrants.*	% in the region.**
East Macedonia–Thrace	580.2	2.6	8.2	2.0	1.8
Central Macedonia	1,810.7	5.7	40.6	8.6	2.5
West Macedonia	263.1	1.3	4.4	1.1	2.1
Epirus	320.6	1.7	9.5	2.1	3.4
Thessaly	695.6	1.4	19.7	3.9	2.9
Ionian islands	183.8	2.4	13.2	2.9	7.8
Western Greece	639.5	3.5	18.2	4.0	3.3
Central Greece	508.8	6.9	31.3	7.1	7.0
Attica	3,498.8	38.2	215.7	47.2	6.8
Peloponnese	505.8	8.4	27.9	6.8	6.7
North Aegean	190.7	1.2	2.8	0.7	2.1
South Aegean	293.3	3.8	31.5	6.6	10.7
Crete	584.0	10.9	26.8	7.0	6.1
TOTAL	10,074.8	87.9	449.7		5.1

\* % of immigrants in the region, in the total number of immigrants in the country.

\*\* % of immigrants in the region, in the total number of immigrants in the region.

Source: ELSTAT, LFS

In the same six regions as in 2011, the percent of immigrants in the total population

of the region is above the national average. This reflects the conditions of the capitalist economic development in these regions (concentration of industrial, tourism–hospitality, and farming–livestock breeding activity), which requires low and medium skilled workforce. It should be noted that the capitalist economic crisis has led to a decrease in the percent of immigrants in the total population of these six regions.

[1] Immigrant is a person who has been or is going to stay in the country for at least 12 months.

### Immigrants and employment

**16** . Based on the historical database of the LFS, the reported employment of immigrants in Greece for the 1996–2019 period is presented in Table 16:

**TABLE 16**

	Employed immigrants	Change in employment (%)	Unemployed immigrants	% of immigrant unemployment
1996	65,100		10,700	16.4%
2000	143,900	121.0%	20,400	12.4%
2006	303,100	110.6%	26,000	7.9%
2011	358,300	18.2%	94,200	20.8%
2013	253,900	-29.1%	156,300	38.1%
2016	227,900	-10.2%	95,800	29.6%
2019	228,900	0.4%	82,600	26.5%

It is not possible to determine whether the large percent increase reported for the 1996–2006 period in Table 16 reflects a real increase in the number of immigrants or a significant decrease in unreported and undeclared employment. However, the most probable scenario is that this increase is due to an improved recording of the real number of immigrant workers in the censuses. It should be noted that the total number of immigrants was approximately 500,000 at its pro-crisis peak .

It is certain that the capital economic crisis hit immigrants hard. The unemployment rate started rising from 2009 and peaked in 2013, when approximately 4 out of 10 migrants were unemployed. The unemployment rate amongst immigrants would have been much higher if a large number of immigrants from neighbouring countries, such as Albania, had not returned to their home countries or gone to other countries to seek work. It should be mentioned that when the immigrants' unemployment peaked in 2013, the unemployment rate among Greek citizens was significantly lower (26.5%) but equally alarming.

### On the occupational status of immigrants

**17** . The statistical index “occupational status” provides some initial and general information on the relationship between immigrants in Greece with the ownership in the means of production, distinguishing them to salaried workers, employers and self-employed. This analysis does not include the category “contributing family workers”, as the size of this category is negligible.

The 2011 Census provides the following data on the employment of immigrants based on their “occupational status”:

**TABLE 17**

Occupational status based on nationality

	Total	Greeks	Foreigners
Employees	3,727,633	3,336,235	391,398
Employers	275,181 (7.4%)	266,972 (8.0%)	8,209 (2.1%)
Self-employed	834,130 (22.4%)	790,323 (23.7%)	43,807 (11.2%)
Salaried employees	2,544,507 (68.3%)	2,211,539 (66.3%)	332,968 (85.1%)

Source: ELSTAT, 2011 Census



Based on the information from Table 17, the vast majority of immigrants are salaried employees (85%). In the sizable category of self-employed, immigrants are under-represented compared to Greeks (11.2% immigrants compared to 23.7% Greeks). Very few foreign citizens are employers in Greece. Considering the very small representation of immigrant salaried employees in the categories “senior managers”, “technicians”, the vast majority of immigrant salaried employees belong to the working class. This fact explains why the capitalist economic crisis and the consequential unemployment has such a big of an effect on immigrants.

The LFS provides the following distribution of salaried employees based on their occupational status in 2019:

**TABLE 18**

Occupational status per nationality (in thousands)

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Greeks</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>
Employees	3,911	3,682	228.9
Employers	289.3 (7.4%)	The published data do not distinguish employers from self-employed	
Self-employed	834.7 (21.3%)		
Salaried employees	2,663.5 (68.1%)	2,461.3 (66.8%)	202.3 (88.4%)

Source: ELSTAT, LFS 2019

The significant decrease in immigrants’ employment during the capitalist economic crisis is also presented in Table 18. Currently, immigrants account for just 5.9% of the total workforce, compared to 10.5% in 2011. Immigrant workers are still a significant proportion among unskilled workers and skilled technicians. However, like for the rest of the occupations, their percent contribution has dropped significantly. Many immigrant workers are employed in the services sector. In particular, more immigrant workers are employed in this sector, in absolute numbers, compared to the number of immigrant workers employed as skilled technicians. The significant decrease in the number of immigrant workers employed in the farming–livestock breeding sector is worth to be mentioned. In 2011, 33,753 immigrant workers were employed in this sector, accounting for the 10.7% of the total number of persons working in the sector. By 2019, their number shrank to 9,400 or 2.3% of the total number of employed persons in the sector. As there are significant differences in the numbers provided by the LFS and the Census for the particular sector, the difference between the two years may be notional. For instance, the LFS reports for 2011 a significantly lower number of skilled farmers and much fewer immigrant workers in this sector (14,800). Therefore, according to the LFS, the immigrant workers were just 3.1% of the employees in the farming–livestock breeding sector in 2011.

In general, for all the sectors with a strong presence of immigrant workers in 2011, this presence remained strong in 2019, as well. However, immigrants’ percent participation in each sector has decreased. For instance, in the sector of domestic workers, immigrants’ contribution dropped from 81.1% to 61.2%, in the Construction sector from 29% to 21.8%, in the Tourism–Hospitality sector from 18.4% to 14.3%, in the Support service activities from 19.8% to 12.7% and in the Agricultural sector sank from 19.2% to 6.4%. These numbers do not necessarily reflect reality, owing to the large number of undeclared work of immigrant workers, particularly among domestic workers. In the Manufacturing sector, the contribution of immigrant workers decreased both in absolute numbers and in percent. Nevertheless, the decrease is not as dramatic as in other sectors and the contribution of immigrant workers in this sector shows remarkable resilience (2% more than the average).

In the total number of immigrant workers, about 23.9% work in the Tourism–Hospitality sector, 14.1% in Construction, 13% in Manufacturing, 12.9% in Trade, 12.8% in the Agricultural sector and 6.7% are domestic workers.

### IMPACT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN THE FOLLOWING PERIOD

**18**. Teleworking and its implementation, apart from its consequences on labour relations and the degree of exploitation, is expected to have a significant impact on the structure of the workforce, especially in relation to

the place of work and residence. Teleworking allows movement outside the urban fabric and counter-urbanization trends at a national level, while the same trend, allows residence in Athens / Greece and employment even abroad at an international level.

Restructuring and concentration of employees in the Commerce sector is expected in the next period, due to e-commerce. One part of employees will definitely work in e-commerce management and another in the subsector of delivery services. A possible reduction in the banking sector is expected. The overall impact on employment is expected to be negative in the next four years as the digital transformation of several sectors of the economy advances.

### ORIENTATION TOWARDS GAINING–DEPLOYING FORCES

**19**. Based on the sectoral classification of the working class, the industry dynamic, and the respective importance of sectors to the extended reproduction of social capital, we can assess that the below sectors will be of increasing importance for the upcoming period:

Manufacturing, with a particular focus on the large workplaces in Food, Energy, Pharmaceutical and Metal Industries. The subsector of large-scale constructions and public works.

The key sector for the whole economy, which is Transportation–logistics and transportation in general (sea, air, land etc.). Under the new conditions, the great importance of the goods distribution sector (courier services) is pointed out.

Telecommunication/IT, for its importance as the backbone of information transfer, the increased role of technicians to ensure teleworking, etc. At the same time, the IT sector is expected to expand, both due to its development in the country and in teleworking from abroad.

The sector of Scientific–Technical services, which is expected to grow in the following period, since the new economic and social conditions increase the relative activities.

Health and Education that, apart from their importance for the reproduction of the labour force, are large sectors gathering self-employed and salaried employees.

Hospitality–Tourism, focusing on large units, to which a section of employees is expected to relocate from the shrinking smaller enterprises in city centres.

Wholesale and retail trade, in which a decline is expected but it will maintain a significant part of the employment and wage labour.

### SOME KEY POINTS ON THE WORK IN THE LABOUR AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

**20**. Based on all the above, in the following period special attention must be paid to:

The specialization of our work in the salaried working women increasing in numbers (proportionally to men in sectors of the economy).

The comprehensive political and trade union intervention in the issues of the working time, flexible labour relations, and teleworking.

The appropriate elaboration of frameworks of struggle in sectors with higher wages than the average, exploiting the pressure exerted by the capital to reduce the average wage.

The deployment of forces in relatively new sectors and subsectors presenting a dynamic growth trend (e-commerce, logistics, large-scale constructions etc.), by taking into account the internal restructuring of sectors and groups that the new investments in green growth and digital transformation will bring to the fore (e.g. Energy, Telecommunications, Mass Media).

The improvement of our intervention in the sectors of Scientific–Technical services, Education and Culture, by also taking into account the specific issues of working as a freelance service provider.

The improvement of our intervention planning in the large group of salaried employees working at small and very small enterprises.

The specialization of our work in salaried immigrants.

The planning of our multifaceted intervention in the unemployed and especially the

long-term unemployed, the numbers of whom will increase.

## Chapter C

### THE SITUATION IN THE LABOUR AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

**21** . Over the previous decade, the labour and trade union movement suffered an even greater blow, its retreat deepened both in terms of the content of actions and integration of the majority of the unions into the capital's strategic goals and in terms of its organizational status and substructure.

The percentage of unionized workers in the private sector does not exceed 15%. According to GSEE (General Confederation of Greek Workers) data—which subsumes 62 Federations and 79 Labour Centres, which in turn affiliate more than 2,300 first-level unions— 360,000 workers participated in the elections over the last three years. That is a historically low point. The retreat in the unionization of the workers is even greater if we take into account that the participation rates of workers in the trade unions are much lower than the ones in their elections, in combination with the extensive alteration of data and the trade unions that act as a rubber stamp and are formed by the employer and government-led trade unionism only to elect more of their own representatives to the union bodies.

In ADEDY (Greek Civil Servants' Confederation)—subsuming 44 Federations that affiliate more than 1,200 first-level trade unions— 265,000 workers participated in the elections. In the public sector, even though the participation rate is at 62%, that only concerns the employees who enjoy a permanent status or employees on open-ended contracts, who join their unions from the first day at work, even unbeknown to them. At the same time, it is supported by a mesh of personal favours, recruitments, postings, transfers, promotions, etc., promoted by the trade union groupings of the bourgeois parties. The contract staff and generally the workers on flexible labour relations in the public sector, whose numbers are increasing, cannot join the trade unions of ADEDY. Moreover, it is worth noted that, in certain sectors (Healthcare, Local authorities), they constitute the majority of the manual workers and clerical staff, whom the trade union leaderships are keeping out of the unions. An exception is the Federations of Education, where the participation of interim-teaching staff etc. is ensured in the first-level trade unions and congresses of the public sector Federations when the class-oriented forces have the majority.

Although 85% of all (private and public) salaried employees are in the private sector on full-time and part-time employment, the majority of the unionized employees is in the public sector and the wider public sector that is covered by GSEE at a percentage of 56% of the total number of unionized employees.

In the last decade and the phase of the capitalist crisis, the working class has grown in number and percentage terms, but its degree of unionization has decreased, in the working class as a whole, by sector and at a regional level.

### Objective factors and changes that affected the unionization level

**22** . The counterrevolution, the overthrow of socialism, acts as an objective factor in the retreat of the labour and trade union movement. Socialist construction in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite the existing problems and deviations, had a positive impact on the labour and trade union movement in the capitalist states, on the workers' level of unionization and demands.

The outbreak of the previous capitalist crisis, with the shrinkage or closure of productive activity in sectors with a history of unionization and struggles, the growth of other sectors, and also new economic sectors over the last decade have a contradictory effect on the course of the retreat.

The retreat is linked to the major negative changes in the working and living conditions of the working class, in the forms and ways of the intensification of exploitation. These are changes shaped by the so-called capitalist restructuring policies and anti-labour reforms that were imposed by the notorious memoranda and other laws as well. The high unemployment and part-time employment rates, the generalization of the forms of temporary flexible work, the mass exploitation of immigrants, the large stratification, and the mobility of young workers from one sector to another and within the same sector have a significant impact on the level of organization and the unity of the working class. They

have further hampered the revitalization of trade unions, together with the deeply reformist trade union content of action that is prevailing in the labour and trade union movement, the development of the line of social partnership and integration of trade unions by the state and the EU mechanisms, while the executives in many first-level company-based unions are hand in glove with the employers.

The bourgeoisie generalized individual contracts by utilizing the legal arsenal provided successively by all governments and the threat of dismissal under conditions of burgeoning unemployment. Employers were allowed to abolish in practice the Collective Agreements, to replace them with contracts signed by associations of persons—which are basically their own bodies—thus having direct negative consequences on the conditions of sale of the labour power and dealing a blow to unionization. Within this framework, the flexible labour relations, the performance appraisals, which in combination with other methods enhanced competition amongst employees, have been established and generalized.

On grounds of objective material factors, the workers' consciousness is also influenced by the various government management options, which are trying to control the consequences of the vicious cycle of concentration and centralization of capital and its depreciation.

The period during which many people had pinned their faith on SYRIZA, the period of illusions about overcoming the consequences of the capitalist crisis with a government of “left” management within the framework of capitalist power, the compromise that was cultivated, and the defeatism following the false hopes, brought a new and general weakening of the trade unions. Previously, reactionary slogans, such as “oust the parties and the trade unions” were spread in the squares of the indignant, while later the logic behind the “ineffectiveness” of the struggles and that “nothing can change” were strengthened since their criterion was linking these slogans to a change of government for the so-called pro-people intervention in the capitalist economy and the EU.

Over that period, class collaboration was promoted by the governments of liberal bourgeois, social-democratic, and opportunist parties. The defamation of class struggle and the contempt for unionization were strengthened. Under the responsibility of the employers and their bourgeois political and trade union forces, the phenomena of disorganization, rigging and buyoff spread; a more aggressive line and practice were shaped towards the class-oriented forces to shield the employers' interests, the system itself. Opposite to these goals lies the action of the KKE and the class-oriented trade unions.

### **The higher trade union Confederations are dominated by the state, government and employer-led trade unionism.**

**23**. The activity of the Party, which has brought concrete results and valuable experience, has not changed the fact that, in the basic sectors of the capitalist economy, the trade unions and a number of second-level organizations are still in close relation with the employer and government-led section that prevails in GSEE and ADEDY, which are basically a mechanism of co-administration and management of employers' and state claims and interests, a purely bureaucratic apparatus. Over the years, its role as a tool of the employers and the state against the working class and its rights has been reinforced.

The trade union groupings of the bourgeois parties, PASKE (grouping of the social democratic PASOK party) and DAKE (grouping of the right-wing party of ND), despite their loss of prestige, maintain the majority in the higher union bodies of GSEE and ADEDY, in which they are in constant cooperation. The SYRIZA forces are also aligned with these groupings. SYRIZA failed to create a significant trade union mainstay both during its government term and in the previous phase in which it effectively absorbed significant PASOK forces in the parliamentary elections.

Currently, the expression of social democracy in the trade union movement adjusts its stance and tactics aiming at strengthening, expanding and consolidating its integration into serving the competitiveness of capitalist economy. In previous years, the great retreat of PASOK—now KINAL—, which was a result of its support to all the restructurings under conditions of deep economic crisis, led its forces to move to SYRIZA, thus making it the main proponent of social democracy. However, that succession, although it aroused controversy within the until-then-prevailing PASKE, did not cause a corresponding decline.

PASKE still maintains an integration mechanism especially in the public and wider public sector, in the banks and certain industrial sectors. Since 2010 and for two consecutive congresses until 2016, PASKE recorded a downward trend both in GSEE and ADEDY, which stopped in 2020 and it now remains first in terms of percentage and seats. That shows certain autonomy in the operation of PASKE —compared to its party— that is based on its close liaison with mechanisms, mostly former public utilities (DEKO), on the connections that trade unions have with these mechanisms, on strong ties of the executive of major trade unions with businesses administrations and the bourgeois state, irrespective of the government lineup. With the support of the Labour Institute of GSEE (INE/GSEE), they continued to form false majorities and to control executives of trade unions through training programmes, labour and contractor agencies that are basically slave agencies and have become apparatuses of close liaison between the Labour Centres and enterprises. PASOK had been in power for many years, but it also established the development of its trade union forces in another historical period. On the contrary, SYRIZA could not have formed a similar union staffing, thus operating in a complementary way to PASKE mainly to form anti-PAME executives and presidencies.

This whole situation reflects the volatility prevailing still in social democracy. Under these circumstances, social democratic union cadres are awaiting the developments; whether KINAL will grind to a halt or whether SYRIZA will remain the prevailing social democratic force despite its current organizational problems. In the meantime, a section of PASKE unionists is looking forward to a possible future cohabitation with ND. Further to that, and with a firm confrontation front, there is potential to liberate unionists that reflect on this decay and are trying to disassociate themselves from all that.

DAKE and others lists expressing the ND at all levels of the trade union movement remain a strong force. In addition, they present a significant increase in ADEDY, especially in the Federations of Education. They utilize, just like PASKE, the same potential provided by employers' associations, the bourgeois state and the European employers' organizations. By utilizing the European programmes and particularly the funds of the INE/GSEE, they have set up, mainly in the Labour Centres of Northern Greece, a significant apparatus for integrating workers, creating trade unions that act as a rubber stamp and producing illegitimate representatives, together with the PASKE forces in private employees.

The SYRIZA forces show a weakening course from 2016 onwards. They presented a temporary increase in ADEDY, during SYRIZA governance and shortly before, while in GSEE that increase was expressed mainly in the cooperation with a small section that split from PASKE (i.e. the list EMEIS). In ADEDY, they maintain forces, despite a decrease shown. At the same time, they continue to elect representatives through single lists with PASKE and DAKE that are supported by the employers. Typical examples can be found at supermarkets and shipping companies. The cadres of SYRIZA participate more actively in the administrations of INE/GSEE and the funds of professional associations in sectors such as the Pharmaceutical industry, Commerce, Shipping. They are an integral part of the apparatus of workers' bribery and integration.

The ANTARSYA forces, mainly, and other opportunist forces, such as META/LAE, have reported a decline in recent years following their support to governmental SYRIZA. In GSEE and generally in the private sector, they remain a marginal force with a few forces in trade unions of salaried scientists and in a few unions of legal person governed by private law that belong to the wider public sector. In the public sector, where they have a more organized presence, they followed the course of SYRIZA union forces; namely, they recorded a slight increase during the parliamentary and governmental rise of SYRIZA and then a decline in the last two congresses of ADEDY. They maintain forces mainly in the teaching staff and hospitals.

They still have joint lists with SYRIZA forces, especially amongst the teaching staff and other areas as well, while in some cases they present joint frameworks of struggle and joint tactics.

In any case, the bar is set high when it comes to the power struggle in ADEDY. The correlation of forces amongst bourgeois liberal and reformist–opportunist forces is not the same in ADEDY as the one in GSEE and the confrontation should not be understood as a replication of the private sector. In ADEDY, the link between the workers and the state is organic, but also the social democratic and opportunist influence expressed several times



in its decisions requires a well-elaborated plan regarding the content, the struggle and the initiatives to confront the illusions that are being created. All the more so that due to the sharpening of the popular problems and the intensification of all the contradictions and conflicts of the capitalist mode of production, the reform agenda in one form or another, addressed to the public sector employees proposes the strengthening of the state in the economy, based on the logic of an “anti-liberal”, “anti-right wing”, “anti-repressive” front, and specializes within the movement in integrating any form of an expressed radicalism.

### **The stifling state control of the unions is strengthened**

**24**. The framework of state control over the trade unions is deepened through several laws, e.g. under the SYRIZA government on the right to strike and then under the ND laws on the operating framework of trade unions and the control of their legality. The legislative framework continuously reinforces the bourgeois state interference. Trade unions are not de facto organizations in terms of organization and operation (statute) that are freely determined by their members. They are governed by legal provisions on trade unions, which are continuously becoming stricter. The bourgeois Justice interferes in addressing the lack of trade union management by appointing an interim executive. This practice has been widely used in the recent past of the trade union movement and the last congress of GSEE, up until the moment that the government intervened by using repressive forces to impose its will on who and how will vote.

The stifling legal provisions limit the activity of the trade unions and the workers' representation. For example, there are no provisions for union committees of a sectoral union, and thus they are not legally established under Law 1264/82. The same applies to electing representatives of sectoral unions from workplaces. Considering that a requirement for the establishment of a union is 21 members and the vast majority of enterprises employs up to 50 members, the great majority of the workers in the workplaces are not allowed to have legal representatives. Even the health and safety committee at work (Law 1588/85) has a threshold of 50 workers for its formation. That limit is convenient for the bourgeois power based on the reality of the Greek capitalist economy in order to exclude, in that way as well, the formal representation of the vast majority of the salaried employees.

Under conditions of capitalist economic growth, they will feel more ready to integrate the trade unions more deeply, not only into a line of consensus and class collaboration but also into the state apparatus. To transform them into a mechanism of a “just and democratic” co-management of the business demands, into bureaucratic mechanisms without a lively and active workers' participation and a decisive role in their mobilization. That has already been happening in the European capitalist countries. Major sectors and industrial regions are Special Economic Zones without a union presence.

That planning has been enhanced, as can be shown through a number of laws. The trade union is being transformed into an apparatus of the Ministry and the employers. The law states that the trade union, even if it manages to sign a sectoral collective agreement, should submit at the same time an economic–technical actuarial study and be bound not to affect the sustainable development of the enterprises of the sector based on its proposals. Therefore, the trade union will become by law a proponent of competitiveness. The attack against the right to strike and the new repressive laws are coming to complement this attack.

In short, this line is reflected in the direction to transform the unions into “labour councils” without mass procedures, without the power to call on a strike, with restrictions on the formulation of goals of struggle within the limits of the financial aims of the enterprise; namely, the “Europeanization” that are trying to accomplish since the '90s. The employers' presence with direct infiltration into the trade union movement is based on the above planning. The much stronger participation and even physical presence of employers in trade unions of large sectors, such as commerce or shipping companies, is an element that stood out in previous years.

At the same time, by enacting rules and through OAED (Manpower Employment Organization), the state controls the financial situation of trade unions, which are financially dependent on it. The lack of financial independence and support to the trade unions through membership dues has a considerable impact on the necessary material infrastructure that would support and enhance their intervention.



Of course, if the workers' indignation grows, it is possible for unions with social democratic opportunist majorities to start a limited struggle "within the resilience limits" of the economy. The experienced bourgeoisie does not want its representatives in the unions to be completely cut off from the workers. The key lies in their orientation. Thus our forces should be prepared for such a possibility.

### The role of the INE/GSEE

**25**. The INE/GSEE intervention is corrosive. This is an Institute that is interconnected with the corresponding research and study institutes of the employers' organization (Federation of Greek Industries–SEV), the Chambers, and the state services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It has a budget of millions of Euros and manages a high volume of European programmes, especially training programmes and courses, and even programmes from the Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework (PA). In addition, it cooperates with the respective union institutes at an EU level, with institutes of the European and international social democracy. Its declared goal is the consolidation of "social partnership", i.e. the "class cooperation", for that reason, there is also an Academy of Executives (school of union leaders at the service of the employers). It presents the choices of the majority of GSEE as scientifically documented by promoting relevant studies and research. It participates and plans the anti-labour policy and the promotion of restructuring together with the employer-led organizations and the governments, thus making the Confederation a joint policy-maker.

In the previous phase of the crisis and before the rise of SYRIZA to governance, the Levy Institute of Economics in collaboration with INE/GSEE contributed —as it advertised— "fundamentally to the planning and implementation of a social employment programme in Greece". Basically, they were running the well-known fixed-term employment programmes that were financed by the EU structural funds. At the same time, the INE/GSEE propagated the change of policy mix by promoting neo-Keynesian recipes. In 2015, it openly supported the acceptance of the EU package and the "YES" in the referendum, together with the employers' organizations. In 2019, it proceeded to a joint proposal with SEV for "productive reconstruction", "healthy competition", and "social alliance" of SEV–GSEE–Chambers.

With the programmes —supposedly— to tackle unemployment, it compiled a very large list of unemployed. Just one aspect of how that method was utilized was the formation of a specific correlation of forces within the unions. Throughout each programme, it created a Private Employees trade union that was affiliated only to the Labour centre and not the Federation and all employees were forced to vote. Therefore, some Private Employees trade unions act as a rubber stamp and include thousands of voters, e.g. The Private Employees trade union in Farsala city (in southern Thessaly), which at the previous congress presented 488 voters.

The INE/GSEE programmes are funded by PA. Their content includes training and retraining workers and training union executives so that they can be capable of managing employee issues for the benefit of business groups, e.g. training programmes on "business conflict management" by union executives. Their goal is for the trade unions to become capable mechanisms for managing employees' problems for the benefit of employers and the state, thus hampering the struggle for even the slightest demands.

### Organizational fragmentation

**26**. Under the responsibility of the forces dominating in GSEE, the organizational fragmentation of the labour–trade union movement and its fragmentation into second-level and first-level trade unions has continued. Especially under the circumstances of the last decade, a serious problem was revealed that there are many Federations in the same sector (Transport, Energy), and even many Labour Centres in the same region.

The union groupings of the bourgeois parties invoke organizational unity only when it ensures the integration of the workers and the class movement; when it secures and promotes the acceptance of the theory of the common interests of the exploiting capitalists and the exploited workers. When conditions are being formed to achieve elementary unity of the workers on the basis of their class interests, they also seek organizational measures

by setting up new organizations at a primary and secondary level. The phenomenon of fragmentation is a continuation of the old guild fragmentation and also a choice, to create organizations for the formation of favourable correlation of forces for the employers and the disunity of the workers, to put additional obstacles to the development of an anti-capitalist line of struggle within the trade unions.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR THE REGROUPMENT OF THE LABOUR–TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

**27**. The KKE played an instrumental role in helping a significant part of the working class to resist and show resilience; it kept alive the importance of militant trade unions; it assembled forces; it regrouped trade unions; it educated the new generation of militants to pursue the line of struggle against capitalists, the state and its mechanisms, their imperialist alliances.

Particularly during the previous capitalist crisis, the activity of the KKE contributed to hindering the extensive retreat of the labour–trade union movement. The even worse condition of the labour–trade union movement in Europe and other capitalist countries would have prevailed in Greece as well, if the activity of the KKE, of its members together with other militants in trade unions and PAME had not fought back, had not hampered, and had not formed a bulwark against the all-out attack of capital and the disorganization of the movement.

The list supported by the KKE in GSEE remains at approximately 20% (it won 19.5% of the votes and 9 seats in the previous congress from which we were barred). Our list in the Public Sector records a distinguishable rise for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive congress of ADEDY and gathers 19%.

The forces supported by the Party gather the majority of the votes in 14 Federations and 20 Labour Centres. We also have elected representatives at 46 Federations and 69 Labour Centres. We intervene in hundreds of trade unions and we can set new goals and plans for each sector in order to include new forces in the ranks of PAME.

We have accumulated considerable negative and positive experience regarding the elaboration of our tactics. We have formed a crucial ideological, political, and organizational substructure as a Party and as a force within the movement to change the current situation by strengthening the unity of the working class and its class orientation for the workers'–people's counterattack in order to lead the social alliance in an anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly direction.

Nevertheless, we must not undermine the objective factors that have resulted in the alienation of sections of the working class from class-oriented unionization and action, together with the pursuits of capital to further blow a strike to the trade unions as the lower form of organization of the working class. The effort to raise the standards of our activity by continuously facing the pressure exerted by the negative correlation of forces towards integration and the subjectivity that the intervention of the Party is the only factor for the overthrow of this negative correlation, constitute a factor of the Party's enhancement. In view of the new, more difficult conditions for the class struggle that we will have to address, we examine the objective factors and the subjective weaknesses; we examine if and how we exhaust the limits in the Party activity itself.

We have defined the basic content of the regroupment of the labour movement as the preparation and development of its ability to decisively and efficiently confront the unified elaborated strategy of capital and capitalist power, in alliance with the popular sections of the urban and rural self-employed. At the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress we need to turn our attention to the matching of our activity with the task of regroupment, which is a matter of strategic importance.

Despite the steps taken towards understanding the necessity to work within the working class and its trade union movement, we face the lack of a comprehensive plan of organization and mobilization of working and popular masses, of operation and activity of trade unions, of foundation of new unions, of change in the correlation of forces in the unions. This weakness can be found both at sectors and at neighbourhoods, municipalities, cities, and villages and needs to be addressed in order to take steps forward, to achieve

results, and to make adjustments wherever needed.

At the same time, we have not yet secured a unified view concerning the following issue: “The Communist Party acts both individually and within the movement”. This element of our activity, which stems from the fact that the Communist Party is the higher and conscious form of expression of the labour movement, sometimes appears as two tasks that cannot be combined in practice; sometimes trade union and Party–political activity are either completely separated or identified. We still face problems regarding the way the relation of the Party with trade unions is in practice comprehended. These issues become more complex in conditions of retreat of the movement; they deprive us of a powerful impetus in our activity and at the same time do not form favourable conditions for Party construction, which is a basic factor for the upsurge of the labour movement.

### Conclusions from the struggles and efforts to create vanguard seedbeds of resistance and demands in the workplaces

**28**. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress, we have waged important struggles under conditions of rapid developments in the capitalist economy and more generally. The capitalist crisis was succeeded by a weak recovery, followed by the new capitalist crisis in conditions of pandemic, which objectively set down new requirements for our struggle and intervention in the labour–trade union movement. During that time, we sought to clarify the character of the developments in a timely and effective manner; to enhance the ideological – political struggle in each phase; to elaborate our tactics, slogans, and framework of struggle. This allowed us to take initiatives and vanguard action. However, we have estimated that the content of the confrontation and the right orientation was not timely adopted by all Party forces. Nevertheless, we gained rich experience on how the struggle against the strategy of the capital was strengthened and how the Organs and Party Groups coped with their leading tasks.

There were numerous cases where business groups stirred up or even openly instigated “workers’ mobilizations” and used their employees as a shield in order to demand greater government support compared to their competitors, exploiting the existing fear of the workers that unless the enterprise is supported, they will be made redundant. Under such circumstances, manipulation and pressure against the workers are intensified. The direct issues that concern them, such as what is going to happen, what about their unpaid work, and the uncertain future in conditions of severe unemployment put them under tremendous pressure. Intense ideological–political intervention and experience drawn for struggles need to be preceded in order for the workers to withstand this pressure, to promote their own demands, and not to succumb to employer’s aspirations.

Huge investment projects, for which monopolies clash, systematically utilize people’s mobilizations for existing problems seeking to promote their own interests and to hinder their competitors’ projects, for example in the Piraeus port and other ports. The conflicts between monopolies often lead to profitable compromises, which however are painful for workers’ rights and the residents’ quality of life. The forces of reformism–opportunism continuously serve such aspirations, disorienting the class struggle and integrating the labour–trade union movement into the bourgeois plans. They utilize their own framework concerning the movement, aiming to drag it under the flag of business interests. The struggle against the workers being trapped into one or another version of the capital required a more suitable elaboration of an advanced framework of struggle, as in the case of the combination of demands for all the workers’ sections in the Piraeus port against the escalating attack, which supported the slogan “The port is public property” and the direction of struggle to make it become true.

Bourgeois and opportunist parties, together with the forces of government and employer-led unionism, promote the slogan of “productive reconstruction” in the framework of varied programmes. “Productive reconstruction” is in fact identified with the goal of capitalist recovery and the change of the “productive model”, despite the fact that from time to time it is camouflaged with seemingly radical slogans. Today, for example, they promote “Green Growth”, setting goals such as lignite phase-out in the name of “climate change”. These goals of struggle of the movement are utilized to trap people into various versions of bourgeois policy.

GSEE and the large Federations of the government and employer-led unionism

promote a comprehensive framework that specializes the strategic directions of capital, supplementary to and in some cases even more specialized than the “Pissarides report”, fostering illusions that the capitalist growth can be profitable both for employers and employees.

In the next period, the two development paths, that is, development either for capital or for the people, will be the main line of confrontation within the labour–trade union movement. This confrontation will be expressed in all sectors. Focusing on the sectors of strategic importance, a more stable, persistent, and planned activity will be needed in each sector, with a specialized line per workplace and trade union, aiming at rallying forces, changing the correlation of forces, and building robust Party Organizations.

In any case, it is confirmed that a higher ideological, political, and organizational work is needed in the Party, together with a continuous elaboration of the ideological–political struggle within the ranks of the movement against bourgeois forces, the employers, the state, the strategy of the capital overall, and opportunism. The enhancement of the ideological–political work and the development of the communists’ ability to specialize their action in each movement per sector, workplace, etc. can promote the organization, rallying, and enlightenment of workers. It can also promote the increase of the KKE’s political influence among the working class, i.e. a decisive factor for the radicalization of consciousness and the stimulation of the class-oriented political activity of the workers, which will raise the issue of radical changes at the level of power.

**29**. Due to the retreat in the movement and the intensifying attack by the bourgeoisie, the effort to organize the struggle and to form demands needs continuous study, lively contact with workplaces, and necessary adjustments that will reveal the plans of capital and its governments, as well as the impasses of the capitalist system; that will seize any opportunity to rally workers, to help them come together and struggle collectively. We aim at turning fist-level trade unions into a militant body of workers’ struggle, into an asset to strengthen the organization of the working class and its militant stance to claim its rights as one of the preconditions to direct the struggle against capital and its power, together with the influence of communist ideas and the general developments that will define the outcome of the class struggle.

In the current phase, it is necessary that the orientation of our political guidance is permeated by the fact that the formation of frameworks of demands requires deep roots in the working class, its current condition, its needs, and its problems, without being assimilated and integrated into the current difficult conditions, always taking into account the level and the experience learned from each sector and workplace. We are at the forefront of the organization of the struggle of the working class, as a precondition to communicate and form demands with the workers themselves—which constitutes an element of militant education—to endow the working class with the need to demand the meeting of all its needs and rights. Especially in the current circumstances, workers in every workplace and sector face grave and acute problems. There are workplaces and sectors where workers are on low pay or are not paid at all, are faced with flexible working hours, etc., and other workplaces and sectors that the problems are presented in another, less extreme form. At the same time, workers’ problems are not exclusively defined by the wage level but from the general policy as regards social insurance, health, education, etc. We are well aware that the framework of struggle to satisfy the contemporary needs is not adopted by all trade unions and workers from the very beginning, since each section of the working class is objectively influenced first and foremost by the situation prevailing in its workplace and sector. We need to decisively overcome addressing the workers with general slogans and restraining our intervention to the limits set by the negative correlation of forces within the movement or a mobilization.

The increase of the degree of organization of the working class results from a combination of various factors, together with the crucial intervention of the Party. The absence from struggle provides fertile ground for defeatism, while participation in the struggle forms preconditions to gain militant experience and self-confidence.

In particular, the struggle against flexible working relations, covering their entire reactionary spectrum, is objectively turning into a conflict with a strategic choice of the capital, which is gradually being promoted in all sectors as a general trend that will

prevail until the revolutionary overthrows. This is a field of confrontation which, under the intervention of the communists, could lead to more general conclusions about the system of exploitation and about the real target that the movement must turn its attention to.

The demands regarding the rise in daily wages and salaries, the collective agreements, the stable working hours, the abolition of overtime work, and the reduction of working time are crucial demands that come into conflict with the heart of bourgeois reforms, while at the same time, the overall needs of the working class and popular families constitute a line that rallies forces, strengthens the struggle and opposes the strategy of the capital. These are class-oriented demands that may lead to the rise of struggle and the improvement of organization, providing that we elaborate them in a correct and not perfunctory manner, taking into account all the factors to form frameworks of struggle within the trade union movement. Our work is based on the firm conviction that the rise of class struggle and regroupment could provide some immediate gains to one extent or another. We utilize the struggle and gains to help the working class realize the need of radical overthrows.

**30** . Our Party elaborated and enriched the framework of struggle of the movement regarding the contemporary needs of the working class and popular families, which was an issue raised at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party. Contemporary needs concern all aspects of life (wages, working conditions, health, education, housing, leisure time, entertainment, vacations, utilization of new technologies for people's benefit, etc.). We take into account that social consciousness is also formed by issues raised by the bourgeois political system, such as human rights-ism, irrational theories about "social gender", etc. All these are issues that also concern the labour-people's movement and are particularly popular among younger ages. The highlighting of all contemporary needs provides the ability to step up the demands, to direct the struggle against the real causes, showing the limits of the capitalist system and shedding a light on the possibilities and conditions for these needs to be satisfied. We aim to make this a matter of concern for the working class and the allied social forces. Certainly, this process will not take place immediately. At first some spearheads will be adopted and escalated; there will also be setbacks depending on the course of the class struggle. A more comprehensive framework will be embraced in the course of the class struggle, in a phase of more obvious improvement of the correlation of forces as regards the political struggle, in conditions of a shock of bourgeois power and, of course, of revolutionary upsurge. The ultimate satisfaction of the ever-expanding contemporary social needs is a matter of the revolutionary power and the socialist-communist construction.

**31** . We elaborated and updated our goals concerning important fronts of struggle, such as the issue of wages and collective agreements, the social security system, health and safety issues at workplaces, the flexible labour relations, the fixed-term contracts and the programmes that essentially recycle unemployment in the public sector, the minimum wage, and the struggle against the privatization of large productive units (DEI, LARCO, etc). We made an effort to include the struggle to tackle acute problems at specific workplaces and sectors (privatizations, dismissals, unpaid work, etc.) into the general struggle for the rights of the workers and the popular middle strata.

In a number of sectors presenting greater opportunities in terms of our own forces, of organization, of experience, and of a more stable intervention, we achieved some results (e.g. ship-repair zone, construction workers, enterprises in the Financial sector, such as "Mellon" and "First Data"). Those results also concerned the halting of the continuous lowering of demands, the raising of militant struggle, the revitalization and regroupment of the movement, the entrenchment of first-level trade unions. The elaboration of sectoral collective agreements in some sectors where there are Party forces and trade unions, such as the Telecommunications and the Finance sector, has had a partial effect on improving the participation of young workers, especially women, confirming that we can attract to the struggle younger generations of workers without experience of social struggles.

Our interventions and initiatives orienting the trade unions to develop such struggles were not embraced, with the exception of the large trade unions that operate mainly in Attica. Such an intervention and development is not an easy front of struggle and does not



secure an escalation of the struggle. A new situation has being formed. A growing number of young workers, who consist the majority of working people, have not enjoyed the collective agreements and other rights of the previous generations. As a rule, the amount and the ways of remuneration are based on a multitude of flexible working relationships, where individual contracts prevail.

In this objective situation, we were faced with a schematic approach and temporary confinement to previous demands. The necessary adjustment encountered difficulties in terms of comprehension. The general negative situation and our own weaknesses did not allow us to organize the struggle at a sectoral level in a stable manner and to take advantage of the initiative to rally 530 unions demanding a National Collective Agreement and increases in wages.

The leading organs and the Party groups need to insist on issues of orientation and specialization of the framework of struggle, particularly as regards certain sections of the working class such as women, immigrants, the new shift of workers and vocational trainees, in order for these sections to increase their level of organization and participation in the trade unions, but also to assist the emergence of union executives, especially women and immigrants, i.e. in critical areas where this work lags behind.

Respectively, we also faced political guidance issues as regards our intervention against problems concerning the workers and the people as a whole, such as social security and health. Before the pandemic, but also during its outbreak, we raised the issue of the state of the public health system and expressed our demands for hospitals and Primary Health Care services. An attempt was made to organize mobilizations, which contributed to the change of the correlation of forces in trade unions of large public Health Units and the Federation of Hospital Doctors, but also to coordinate labour unions and associations of the self-employed, women, and farmers. However, in some cases, mainly in neighbourhoods where Health Centers or other Primary Health Care structures that did not have doctors, nurses, infrastructure, etc. can be found, we did not avoid the unelaborate use of the Party positions on Primary Health Care, setting as a precondition for the Executive Boards of trade unions to adopt the need for radical social and political upheavals at the level of power, which guarantee the right of people to health. Thus, the attempt for the maximum mobilization of the mass movement in these regions in practice failed.

**32** . In some cases, there is a perception that identifies the promotion of the Party positions by communists with the formation of frameworks of struggle, without any elaboration and escalation, as it is considered that such a thing protects us during mobilizations for acute problems that were initiated by other political forces, mainly social democratic and opportunist ones. Undoubtedly, the combination of forming frameworks of struggle and struggling within the movement sets demanding requirements. It requires a good monitoring of developments, knowledge of the problems, and elaboration of the arguments that highlight their causes and contribute to the rallying of workers and people in the struggle to clash with the strategy of the capital and the policies of the bourgeois governments.

It is crucial for our intervention to assimilate and express in practice that the activity of the communists and the struggle against the influence of bourgeois forces in the movement, the employers, and various state mechanisms that intervene in the movement in an organized manner and an elaborated plan is no less demanding than the independent ideological–political activity of the Party. On the contrary, it is more complex, especially in conditions of an extremely negative correlation of forces, declining trade union membership, demobilization and conservatism. It should be understood in depth that the struggle within the movement cannot be done by the unelaborate use or the mere copying of the central Party propaganda, the central or local political initiatives of the Party. Trade unions are comprised of workers with varying degrees of class consciousness, expressed in different ideological–political perceptions and influences, with different trade union experience and action, while the trade union struggle by its nature revolves around the conditions of sale of labour power. Only through the intervention of the communists will the unions be able to walk the path of the anti-monopoly and anti-capitalist struggle.

The cadres and members of the Party, operating in the ranks of the labour–trade union movement, with their vanguard activity need to develop the ability to wage the



ideological–political struggle in a lively manner in the mass movement, addressing labour forces that find it difficult to reject the deeply entrenched liberal bourgeois, social democratic and opportunist views. They need to develop their ability to take into account the workers and people that do not participate, are disappointed, passive, and trapped in the framework of individual solutions, by struggling against the factors that paralyse them. We seek that the struggle within trade unions supports the selection criteria of demands, reveals the mechanism of exploitation, enriches and enhances the anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly character of struggle, contributes to the organization and active participation of workers, and confronts —insofar as the Party members and cadres are able to do so— the reformist–government or trade union–opportunist influence. Our intervention must aim the class opponent and not only the bourgeois government, to foster the need to expand the struggle for wider rights and needs as well as for different fronts of struggle (health, education, etc.), to highlight the terms and conditions for resisting and fighting back the elaborated strategy of capital, and to shed a light on the potential to satisfy the ever-increasing popular needs.

A main issue of the political guidance work of the organs remains how to utilize the ideological assets provided by the Party, as the problems we face are connected to gaps in the assimilation of crucial ideological positions and elaborations of the Party as well as difficulties to specialize the policy of the Party in each sector and workplace. In this regard, the continuous study and generalization of experience apropos the way we work in practice with the political line and the theses of the Party will have a decisive contribution.

**33**. During the pandemic, we witnessed an unprecedented situation, in which the Party activity within the working class needed to be continued and the response of the labour movement to the bourgeois policy, that sacrifices social needs to secure the operation of the capitalist system and the profitability of business groups, needed to be prepared. The experience gained from the escalation of the content and the forms of struggle under conditions of curfew, fear and obstacles to mass political struggle is crucial for the future. Since the first mobilization by doctors to the May Day demonstration and the first nationwide strike in November under pandemic conditions, there was an enormous volume of work to form goals and demands as well as to enrich and escalate the forms of struggle and propagation.

The accumulated experience from mobilizations shows that it is very important for the Party, through the activity of its members and cadres, to undertake initiatives not only to raise issues but also to massively intervene among the workers, to consolidate a right basis for the demands, plans and orientation from the very beginning, regardless of the dimension the may acquire. The assistance provided from the guiding organs should encourage the party basis to undertake initiatives, to acquire thorough knowledge of the situation prevailing in each area, without underestimating any problem that potentially could be the final straw, in order to immediately develop actions where the situation becomes acute. Constant readiness is needed so as to intervene against problems created by the general political situation, such as the ones that recently emerged due to the pandemic. In such cases, we may achieve some immediate results, mainly concerning a rise in the class political consciousness.

When conditions of mobilization are formed around acute problems, the Party members play a vanguard role and intervene, even when the mobilizations are initiated by organizations and groups where we do not have the majority or have no representatives. We examine each time the form and the escalation of our intervention in a collective and specific manner. This also applies to our stance towards mobilizations that we deem necessary and strike rallies of sectors organized by federations and first-level trade unions, so that the communists, the Party supporters and the trade unionists who rally in PAME intervene and participate in their trade unions. In such matters of tactics, any schematic approach or replication of other cases is wrong. In each occasion, we need to examine whether our forces will be dissociated from that particular mobilization in terms of place and time.

We have the ability and it is necessary to assess in a timely and objective manner the dispositions of the masses. It is necessary for the communists to intervene in a planned and organized manner as the vanguard in terms of the content, the direction, the forms of

organization and struggle, leading in the mass collective processes of the movement, being flexible towards the joining of new forces and at the same time being very careful, without diminishing the element of ideological–political vigilance and struggle.

### **A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN REGROUPMENT IS THE COURSE OF PAME AND THE INCREASE IN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS THAT RALLY WITH IT**

**34** . The creation and the action of PAME all these years has proven to be of decisive importance. PAME was founded on the initiative of communists who were developing vanguard action in the labour–trade union movement, and it is the class-oriented rally of Federations, Labour Centres, labour unions and trade unionists in a line of struggle in an anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly direction; it is a highly significant achievement of the movement, as we estimated at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress as well.

The development of its course and its scope is important. It has become a point of reference, it expresses the necessity for regroupment and the counterattack of the labour–trade union movement, the existence of a distinct class pole in conflict with government and employer-led trade unionism and the line of the opportunist current.

At its founding in 1999, a conference of trade unionists was held at the Stadium of Peace and Friendship, representing 230 first-level trade unions and 18 second-level organizations, Federations and Labour Centres.

Today, after the 4<sup>th</sup> Nationwide Conference in 2016, PAME rallies 335 first-level unions, 25 second-level organizations (9 Federations and 16 Labour Centres). This positive course, however, must not foster complacency because it does not negate the fact that workers for the most part do not actively participate in their unions and there are problems in union function and action.

In the years that have followed, serious steps have been taken to confront outdated perceptions and habits, the phenomenon of seeing PAME as a trade union grouping; firstly, to make clear to Party forces what PAME's character is —a front to rally labour unions and trade unionists that mobilize on a nationwide level based around a framework of struggle that has been created and is constantly being enriched, taking the developments into account. There is a wealth of experience, but a steady orientation is required in all the guiding Organs, the PBOs and the Party Groups, so that, due to the very situation of the labour–trade union movement, mistakes, hesitations, and delays that enmesh the existing dynamic will be dealt with.

Although organizational issues have been resolved, such as where and if local Secretariats are being established, that they are not a substitute for a union, there are still problems with the existence and function of sectoral Secretariats that were created in previous years. Today, we can deal with such problems from a much better position.

It is the responsibility of the cadres and the members of the KKE that are elected to the bodies and are active in the labour unions of the working class to strengthen the role of the unions themselves that participate in PAME, for it to become fully established and expand as the class rally of the labour movement whose action is based on mass and collective processes, with the active participation of the workers, and is not restricted to the oppressive framework imposed by state control of mass action. The function and the action of the unions must be ensured. Through our activity, the unions need to confirm their rally with PAME; this process needs to mature within their ranks and to reach a deeper agreement on the line of anti-capitalist orientation.

We must consider and not underestimate that even when the totality of members of a union have made a collective decision to participate in PAME, there are still different viewpoints and naturally disagreements, prejudices, and confusions. Even where the majority or the leading force are communists, it is not correct to interpret this as total agreement with the framework and the line of PAME, even when the statute of the union recognizes the principle of class struggle and accepts the abolition of exploitation as a declared goal.

The work of communists on the elaboration of positions and slogans in each sector and union; on the development of apt demands and argumentation, of a framework of struggle, of a plan of action; on the choice of the appropriate forms of struggle, is also necessary within the unions that participate in PAME. There are even greater demands in those unions that do not rally with PAME, in trade unions where communists are in the

minority or we do not have representatives, much more so in workplaces without union representation. We need to understand and to distinguish criticism towards the viewpoints of workers and criticism towards the leaderships of government and employer-led trade unionism or the line of the opportunist forces; in the first case, it is not directed towards the class enemy, but towards working men and women who have an objective interest in clashing with the capitalists and their state, to struggle with us to overthrow capitalism.

21 years after the founding of PAME, it is necessary for us to ensure the follow-up of initiatives, with goals and a plan, centrally and by sector; to become even more capable within the actions of the labour–trade union movement; to contribute so that PAME becomes its main force, expressing ever-wider sections of the working class. Thus, it is necessary for PAME to expand through struggles to win the majorities in new unions, Federations, and Labour Centres, with a plan to create mass unions and to establish new ones, to organize young working masses, further reinforcing its influence, drawing those unions where communists are not in the majority into the joint struggle. All of this in combination with the ideological–political intervention of communists in the workplace, person-to-person, so that we steadily win over sections of the working class with the political line of the KKE, freeing them from the dominant ideology and politics.

Understanding this issue is necessary to deal with an existent danger, that under the weight of the movement’s retreat, there is complacency and compromise in guiding Organs and Party Groups, around the very small steps that are occurring to make the unions mass organizations and the expansion of PAME with new ones.

**35** . The trade unions that participate in PAME took on initiatives that led to joint action with other unions that do not participate in PAME around large fronts of struggle, a fact that revealed the new possibilities. Overall, in all the initiatives, approximately 165 unions that do not rally with PAME agreed on joint action. This militant coordination reached the point where general strikes took place four times over recent years, with decisions by unions and second-level organizations, overcoming the undermining and open strike-breaking action of the majority in the administration of GSEE. This effort and the joint action with the radical forces in the movements of the farmers, the self-employed, the women, and the youth are factors showing an awakening and pressure on the union organizations where forces are in the majority who are opposed to, or who do not understand, the need for a class orientation of the movement.

It is vital to continue to broaden and to maintain a network of unions and other types of collective organizations around PAME (who are not rallied in PAME) with mass processes, through struggle, with an ongoing effort, with planning by sector and region. Sometimes it will be more, other times less, striving for every initiative of the class movement to become a focus of struggle with the other forces, to create rifts.

There are, however, cases of unions where the class-oriented forces are in the minority, and where no work takes place in that direction because there is the fear that a proposal to meet with PAME will be voted down or that, if a positive decision is taken, it will whitewash employer-led trade unionism and the forces who are responsible for the situation in the movement will find a way to enhance their image. Ultimately, this stance in practice hinders and weakens the struggle, it places obstacles to the unified implementation of striking a blow at government and employer-led trade unionism.

Our planned action aims to rally unionists and unions where possible, through collective decisions, but also to reveal to the workers the forces that hinder the organization of their struggle, or attempt to subjugate the content and the waging of the struggle to capitalist interests. This is the most essential way for working people to draw conclusions, through their very own experience, a process which of course cannot alone ensure that a revolutionary workers’ consciousness will mature but is an important pre-condition.

The struggle with the employer and government line, but also with the opportunist stance, must be waged through mass processes in the first-level unions, either sectoral or enterprise-based. We should not retreat in facing the great demands that mass processes in the unions have (general assemblies, gatherings, meetings), in which our forces become more experienced and more capable. Here lies the opportunity to change the situation in the unions and to educate new forces within the movement.

This orientation has not been mastered in depth nor in a unified way by all the guiding

Organs and the central Party Groups. We have gained very positive experience from some specific sectoral interventions, such as in Tourism and the Hospitals, where the class-oriented unions have played a vanguard role in the participation and action of many unions in their sector. However, there is no corresponding plan and orientation in all the Federations and Labour Centres where our forces are in the majority and the initiatives that they take are directed to and rally a minimal number of unions in relation to the number of members they have.

Despite the disrepute of GSEE, government and employer-led unionism, together with the notion of “social partnership”, dominate in the key Federations and the union organizations of strategic sectors (Energy, Banks, Transportation, Telecommunications), from which they draw their strength in GSEE as well. It is an element that will weigh down and hinder regroupment in the coming years as well. In these sectors, almost all the problems on how we work in unions where we have a minority position is expressed. Of course, the objective difficulties also weigh us down, because despite the change in the composition of the workplaces and labour relations, the decrease in the number of permanent employees hired by the trade union groupings of the government parties, they continue to be sectors with the most hard-core segment of labour aristocracy, that maintained a decent level of benefits and income, even during the decade of the crisis.

**36** . In the years since the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party, the struggle on the role of the unions, the orientation of struggle, and the rise in the degree of organization has intensified. It was expressed through struggles in which communists led the way, in congresses of Labour Centres, Federations; in the very Congress of GSEE in Kalamata, Rhodes, and Kavouri, which helped to expose the mechanism and methods of the employers and the bourgeois state to manipulate the labour–trade union movement, for the open and hidden buying-off of consciousnesses, the flagrant intervention of employers. The confrontation with bourgeois and opportunist forces — who unite against the Party but also against PAME— intensified, utilizing various forms and means of the movement (e.g. protests, resolutions, demonstrations, take-overs, threat of lawsuit and lawsuits, press conferences, articles, parliamentary questions).

The possibility for trade unionists who do not agree with the totality of our politics to join forces with communists was demonstrated through these confrontations. Some more, some less, stood up to great pressure, cooperated in an honourable way, acknowledging to the vanguard communists that they can organize the struggle with consistency and defend the interests of the workers; they acknowledged and trusted in their intervention to change the negative situation in the labour–trade union movement, the struggle against the employers’ role, in which trade union leaderships are completely immersed.

In all cases, our forces came out strengthened in terms of experience; new cadres emerged who will constitute a mainstay in the upcoming years. Positive changes in the administrations of Labour Centres created more favourable conditions to escalate the struggle, that can contribute to the effort to step up the organization of first-level unions, an issue that cannot be resolved automatically as it requires a steady orientation and corresponding initiatives. Despite all of this, there are many Federations and Labour Centres where we do not act, where we do not have any elected representatives.

The situation is not the same in all cities and unions, as regards both the unions that rally in PAME and those where communists are in the minority or there are no elected communists. There are, that is, unions that have problems with their functioning and the ability to mobilize workers.

The organizational power and influence of the KKE in each sector and workplace is a decisive element to change the situation, it demands foresight, steady orientation and planning from the guiding organs and the Party Groups, strong ties with the masses, enhanced ideological–political level, the ability to maneuver, boldness and initiative to cope with this task.

**37** . The retreat of the labour–trade union movement in our country is also affected by the situation in the international labour movement, with the domination of “Free” trade unions worldwide and the dominance of the ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) in Europe, which is an organic element of





the EU. GSEE participates and is a member of ETUC.

Our Party supports the action of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). PAME, as a rallying front of unions and trade unionists, participates in the WFTU, as well as in the sectoral federations of the WFTU and in its Presidium.

Throughout the previous years, very significant international action was developed with informational campaigns, coordination of militant mobilizations, solidarity with large strike battles, in which the organizations that participate in the WFTU were at the forefront, e.g. in India with one million strikers, in South Africa, and in France.

The WFTU was strengthened with new organizations from all the continents (e.g. South Africa COSATU, India and at the European level) which was an important issue in previous years, with the development of joint action with second-level organizations, such as the Labour Centre of Marseilles, Labour Centres of boroughs in Paris, the Federation of Chemical Workers of France (FNIC-CGT), unions in Italy and Spain.

The recognition of PAME at the international level is great. Indicative is the Workers' May Day demonstration of 2020 that gained international acknowledgement.

The WFTU was formed on 3 October, 1945 in Paris, immediately after the end of the imperialist World War II with the Anti-fascist Victory of the Peoples. It survived the counter-revolution and, with the contribution of KKE forces and other militant trade unionists on a global level, developed new action, demonstrating the capacity for mobilization and joint coordination.

The ideological-political struggle is also developing within the ranks of the WFTU, which reflects the situation in the International Communist Movement. Even bourgeois forces seek to exploit the blunting of anti-capitalist reflexes, the ideological confusion that prevails even among communist forces who are active in the international trade union movement. Despite all this, better conditions have been created to develop discussion on the correlation of forces in each organization that participates in the WFTU, their prospects, their framework of struggle, and our intervention.

### THE MAIN TASK FOR REGROUPMENT IS THE INCREASE IN THE DEGREE OF ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

**38**. Today, we urgently need to contemplate how to strengthen the unionization of workers at their workplaces. It is a task of primary importance and a basic criterion for effective action. Organization in the workplace, the increase in the degree of organization of the working class, and the changes in the correlation of forces are basic objectives and must be fought for in a unified way, in every sector and area.

We actively work in all the unions, independently of their form of organization (sectoral, enterprise-based, occupational). The situation in Attica and Thessaloniki, the largest regions of the country where the majority of the working class is concentrated based on the unions that make up the Labour Centres in those regions, shows that the vast majority of organized workers (with a criterion being that they've paid their union dues and participate in union elections) are in enterprise-based unions. From those who voted in the Labour Centres of Attica, 60% are in enterprise-based unions, 23% in occupational, and 18% in sectoral ones. Correspondingly, the percentage of voters in union elections are 61% in enterprise-based unions, 31% in sectoral, and 21% in occupational ones.

The sectoral unions can embrace the great mass of young workers who are mainly working in a highly mobile and flexible environment with new forms of employment, without of course leaving the totality of workers outside of the action. We strive for the sectoral unions to contribute mainly to organizing workers in large workplaces, to connect their struggle with the struggle of the enterprise-based unions in large enterprises in each sector, and to coordinate the unions in different sectors. Older and more recent experience has shown that it is difficult to develop struggles successfully, if they are not grounded in a strong organization in each enterprise. We can specify this orientation by sector more precisely.

There are workplaces all over the country where the need to establish new unions is crucial, like the concentrated retail sector (commercial centres of all types), food chains (supermarkets), in Tourism with the hundreds of hotels, the food production industry, etc. Where there are unions, we develop vanguard action within them, even when our forces are minimal. Otherwise, we contribute with a plan to the formation of sectoral, or enterprise-based unions in large workplaces, which can unite all the categories of workers

in each enterprise, in commercial centres, and groupings of enterprises.

We need to study more substantially the content and forms of our intervention in sectors that have dynamic development, that are prioritized by capital and are in a phase of concentrating new labour force. Accordingly, we need to study the internal changes in sectors that are also of strategic importance. Such sectors are Energy, Transport, Freight Forwarding and Logistics, Metal, the modern Military Industry, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Recycling. We also need to examine the elements of development, how they are reflected in the Party and trade union structures, the needs, identifying the objective factors that act upon this work and hamper, for instance, the organization of the trade union movement at the Federation level or of first-level unions that do not correspond to the developments in a sector and do not cover the totality of workers in them, but also the related initiatives for the creation of new unions, for adaptations, even for the changes that are needed to be made in the deployment of our forces or the unions that rally in PAME in a sector.

At the second-level Federations, we advocate sectoral federations and not occupational federations that foster division and fragmentation.

We must contribute to the creation of unions in areas that harmoniously combine such work at the workplace with the place of residence, with careful preparation and concentration of forces, but also making sure not to set up makeshift unions in every municipality and region. Especially in the urban centres of Athens and Thessaloniki, there are municipalities with a large population and a concentration of thousands of workers in sectors, such as the Retail Industry, Food and Hospitality, Tourism, that cannot be covered by the existent unions, with headquarters located far away and with the experience today's workers have with unions as a reality. In any case, wherever and as long as there is no union, we are for setting up Struggle Committees of workers that can constitute an initial form of a union.

At the same time, we support and promote new forms of organizations, along with the unions, that will embrace the large section of precarious workers, with flexible forms of work, in under the table work, with continual mobility, without sectoral consciousness. Such initiatives of organization and collective action are the Worker-Youth Centres in the neighbourhoods, the Greek and Immigrant Workers' Clubs which operate within a framework of solidarity and collective expression, teaching the Greek language to immigrant workers and refugees, that may not be forms of organization within the formal structure of the trade union movement, but can unite the workers, and to educate them in the spirit of collective organizing.

A primary issue is the action of the unions to deal with the problems of immigrants, considering that objectively they are a part of the working class of Greece. Our experience has shown that it is not an easy issue. However, our action on this front, from the period of the counter-revolution where immigrants began to arrive here en masse from the former socialist countries, especially from Albania, but also from Asian countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, India), had positive results, in the Construction sector, in Textiles, the Food industry and elsewhere. Of course, during the period of capitalist economic crisis immigrants began leaving for their home countries or to other countries of the EU, while at the same time the imperialist wars in the Middle East increased the waves of refugees and immigrants from Asian countries (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria), but also from countries of Northern Africa.

We need to deal with the issue of immigrants more systematically, as a section of the working class of Greece, so that they are assimilated and struggle together with Greek workers, both for their own problems which are created by the exploitative system, but also for the totality of issues of the working class.

In addition to the action that must be developed by the unions, with the intervention of communists, to unionize women and young workers, the possibilities and the contacts of the Women's Associations must be better utilized, particularly with working women in Retail, in Health, in Education. This will provide impetus to the unions as well and will have a positive effect on their becoming mass organizations, to the degree that they coordinate their action and occupy themselves actively with all the issues that concern the working class—popular family and the youth. There are scores of issues for action starting with the neighbourhoods, in combination with action around problems at work. In addition, we



strive for cultural activities (music, theater, books), athletic activities, and solidarity actions, with organized intervention for leisure time, to become hubs of activity to get people organized.

**39**. The struggle for the role of the unions is a tough ideological, political, and organizational struggle, first with the capitalists and their organizations, the bourgeois governments, the bourgeois parties and as an extension, their forces in the movement. Today, the bourgeois parties and the government are turning their attention once again to the situation in the trade union movement, desiring to reinstate their manipulative tactics, to invest now for the difficult periods ahead.

The call for “parties out of the trade union movement”, independence, without a political party identity has returned. Of course, the union has organizational independence, which we militantly defend against the multifaceted intervention of employers and the state in trade union activity. In addition, it is crystal clear that the trade union movement and the unions, are not a party; thus they do not have an independent programme to achieve power. They are directed to all workers, independently of their political and ideological choices. However, they are constantly coming face-to-face with the consequences of the exploitative economy and power, thus, in confrontation and clash, not only with each capitalist, but also with the government and the bourgeois parties. There is no such thing as neutrality in the unions. Of course, this confrontation does not take place in a uniform way since there is no uniformly developed class political consciousness. The aim for this to mature within struggles, to be expressed to one degree or another within the interventions of the unions, is a complex issue and is the responsibility of the communists.

However, the state is dealing a heavy blow to the heart of union functioning, under the pretext of alleged existent problems. The absence of General Assemblies, gatherings, and workplace visits by trade union leaders, the lifeless congresses with empty auditoriums only for the election of the Executive Board and representatives, without discussion and struggle, are all signs of a degradation that was brought about through conscious choice. They use methods, such as organizing union elections through electronic platforms, which they present to the workers as a form of modernization, with the goal of eradicating General Assemblies.

This overall direction will be implemented and will co-exist with the escalation of oppression and the obstacles placed on the action of communists in the labour movement, to restrict union organization and action, especially against the mobilization of class-oriented unions and PAME.

Based on the new “legality” that is being created, during the next period there will be even more instances where institutions of the bourgeois state (trials, etc.) and employers will not recognize unions and collective decisions; they will reject the signing of Collective Agreements under legal pretexts; they will penalize action, even mass processes of union organizations. The confrontation between the labour–trade union movement with the oppressive state-monitoring of the unions is a serious issue of ideological, political, mass intervention and struggle.

The period of the pandemic brought rich experience from “Organized Disobedience” and the action of unions against the prohibitions and the oppressive measures that the government took under the pretext of the “healthcare crisis”.

Through the organization and mass participation of working people in collective processes and the action of unions, we strive to challenge the reactionary legal framework, but also in cases of various forms of prohibitions, to establish de facto the existence, the function, and the collective processes of the unions. For the greatest possible pressure to be put on the state and employer organizations to be forced to accept the action of unions, even to legally recognize them, but also to reveal the limits of bourgeois legality.

With the pretext of the pandemic, there was an effort to proceed to electronic voting processes for electing leadership and the administrative councils in Education and in other sectors of the Public Sector. The almost universal abstention from the vote, of more than 90% of educators from the process, show that there is resistance and reflexes among the working people, who comprehend the reactionary nature of these regulations.

**40** . The experience from the struggles of the labour movement brought to the surface the difficulty and weakness as regards the guiding work of communists around the content of action in the first-level unions, so that these are truly organizations that concentrate the majority of workers and are organizations of class struggle. It is a problem of guidance as much in the Party Organs, especially in the Sectoral Committees, as well as in the Party Groups of the Federations, where to deal with the issue, the CC itself and the Section on Labour–Trade Union Work must contribute. We must be aware of the problems in guiding Party members, to change the function of the first-level unions that is not efficient, with the danger that under conditions of greater retreat of the movement it will get much worse.

The development of an integrated network of union organizations and the concentration of forces against the class enemy cannot happen if, with responsibility of the communists, the functioning of the unions is not improved and upgraded, so that the Executive Boards have an idea of the problems their members face, the situation in the workplace and the sector, a steady plan of initiatives that promote a framework of struggle, concern about finding new ways and forms to make it easier for workers to participate. To utilize all the forms and possibilities, so that the unionized workers, either in the sectoral, or in the company-based union, will play their role, to not limit their action simply to participation in elections. To be helped so that inside the workplace, in the production division where they work, to be the “eyes and the ears” of their union. Together with the other trade unionists, initially, workers can be gathered, even informally in a group, a committee of the union that will inform and mobilize fellow workers, that will confront the bosses in a militant manner. To be an initial form of a possible union committee or a health and safety committee. To get other workers to join the union. It is a guiding task of vital importance for the next years, to widen the circle of workers that actively work next to the Executive Board of the unions, expanding the structure of the union organizations, creating at the same time a plan and the pre-conditions to get the majority of workers into the unions and the Federations, an issue which does not concern only the battle in the period before the union elections.

An issue that must concern us is the guidance of the members of the KKE and KNE on their participation and action as much in the unions but also around the acute problems that the working-class family is facing in their neighbourhood. It requires tenacity to break down whatever boundaries exist between the action of communist trade unionists in the workplace and in the neighbourhood, the logic that arises again from the past which says that workplace problems are taken care of by the union, and neighbourhood problems are the responsibility of some other comrades in the area-based PBO or of those comrades with duties in Local Administration.

The task, for instance, of getting a worker to sign up and to participate in his union is very complex and difficult compared to previous years. The great devaluation of unions and the general retreat are serious hindering factors. For the necessary steps to be taken, the requisite trust towards the vanguard militant–communist–trade unionist must be developed. Consequently, action is needed in everything —they must see us at work, in the neighbourhood, in the Parents’ Committees, at the Health Centres, for every small and great problem we need to be on the frontline, for discussion to take place on all the problems in the workplace and for constant effort to be made through forms and initiatives for participation in the union. With militant action, which means well-posed, correct ideological–political work be carried out, so that the need for the struggle to be organized against the strategies of capital is assimilated more widely.

#### **THE NEED TO ESTABLISH COORDINATING COMMITTEES OF TRADE UNIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE MOVEMENT OR STRUGGLE COMMITTEES ON A TERRITORIAL BASIS, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND THE CITIES**

**41** . The coordination and joint action between trade unions and other mass organizations have had a certain contribution as a way of intervention. Mobilizations and solidarity actions were organized in areas affected by natural disasters (e.g. Mandra, Mati, Lesvos, Karditsa, Samos). The communists were at the forefront of organizing solidarity actions through the trade unions, of highlighting the causes of the disaster, and of demanding infrastructure and services for protection against

natural disasters (wildfires, floods, earthquakes). More planned interventions were carried out that found expression in mass mobilizations against the bourgeois governments and the Regional–Municipal authorities' policies on the environment and the quality of life of the working class and popular strata, on waste management, towards industries that pollute Attica, Piraeus, West Thessaloniki, Volos, etc. and recently on wind turbines in Thessaly. These examples illustrate the struggle of the labour movement on a wide front that also took on the character of coordinated action of trade unions with unions of the self-employed, farmers' associations, women's associations, youth organizations, student councils, parents' associations, etc.

Of particular importance was the Party's intervention and role regarding the sharpening of the refugee issue on the islands and in areas of mainland Greece, as well as its vanguard action against the entrapment of refugees and the tackling of reactionary forces that acted and continue to act supported by the tentacles of state and other apparatuses together with NGOs, seeking to integrate the workers and the people. The activity of the Labour Centres of Lesvos, of Samos, of the Northern part of the Dodecanese, and of the Chios Regional Section of ADEDY provided as with valuable experience for our political guidance work. They were at the forefront of the justified reaction of broad popular sections against the government and EU policy as well as the imperialist agreements and plans that are responsible for the entrapment of refugees. They reacted against the presence of enhanced repressive forces on the islands, expressed their solidarity with refugees, and isolated fascist groups and relevant slogans.

**42** . Through the planned and vanguard action of the Party and KNE forces, we seek to form a militant movement that will mobilize broader popular masses around acute problems on a territorial basis (city or neighbourhood). The direction of this movement will be reinforced along the struggle. At the same time, we strive to lay the foundation and substructure of sectoral and enterprise-based unions on a territorial basis. The expansion of the unions' framework of struggle, that is, beyond demands related to financial and other working issues, needs to stimulate the struggle for all the problems that the workers and the people face, taking into account their sharpening and their necessary escalation. We need to create preconditions for joint action with the organizations of the self-employed and other mass organizations, with women's associations, with parents' associations, etc. We aim to be on the frontline in every place through the unions and other organizations of the movement, so that the workers get organized and struggle for their life and survival, strengthen solidarity, and coordinate their various sections.

The initiative of the communists in each area must be grounded on existing possibilities in order to help more organizations rally and mobilize around fair demands, which will open the way to come into contact and struggle with broader popular forces. Other political forces are likely to participate —since they are mass organizations— through their representatives in the movement. For this reason, elaborate preparation is required for all issues, demands, frameworks and forms of struggle.

Through this intervention, the movement can emerge more massive and robust in terms of organization. We can make steps to detach workers and people from capitalist manipulation, so that they will not be trapped in the system nor in social democratic and opportunistic delusions, to join forces with the Party and KNE. We can also make steps towards the promotion of social alliance, so that the direction of struggle acquires an anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly orientation.

## CHAPTER D

### ON THE INTERVENTION OF THE PARTY IN THE ALLIES OF THE WORKING CLASS AND THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL ALLIANCE

**43** . In the context of the implementation of the Political Resolution of the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress, a Nationwide Conference was organized and carried out on the intervention of the Party in the urban self-employed, along with an Extended Plenum of the CC on the work on toiling farmers. The documents of both Bodies are published by "Synchroni Epochi". A process of internal discussion preceded in the first

case while it followed in the latter; however the discussion in the respective PBOs has not been completed yet. In both cases, the need for such a discussion is confirmed as regards the formation of a more unified view on the identification of potential allies of the working class, the direction of our intervention in their movements, and the promotion of joint action in the prospect of social alliance in an anti-monopoly and anti-capitalist direction.

We need to engage in implementing the Resolutions in the run-up to the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress and especially after it. The overall discussion confirms that, first of all, the leading organs should acquire the ability to guide our intervention in these social forces as well, and that this is not strictly the task of the respective Party forces of the urban self-employed or the farmers. In this regard, we have included already elaborated positions—decisions in the Theses for the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress, in order to focus the attention of all the Party forces during the pre-congress discussion on them.

#### ON THE DETERMINATION OF THE POTENTIAL ALLIES OF THE WORKING CLASS

**44** . The social alliance includes the self-employed mainly in cities and towns who are characterized by the individual ownership of means of production and possibly limited commercial or other form of capital, limited extraction of surplus value.

The Party focuses on the self-employed without employees, knowing that they may also employ members of their family or other unregistered workforce, mainly on a seasonal basis. The theoretical perception and political action of the Party also take into account the stratification by sector. For instance, in the sector of scientific–technical services, in the offices of law services, in the technical–engineering offices, in accounting offices, etc. we witness the coexistence of salaried employees with a status of a freelance services provider, half-proletarians who mainly work under one employer, other self-employed, as well as employers. The Conference highlighted the need to focus more on the new sections of the urban self-employed, such as scientists, artists, and certain self-employed health professionals (e.g. physiotherapists).

In the lower middle strata, there is great variation from one sector to another and from a type of work to another in one specific sector, while the upper strata are clearly connected with the interests of capitalist ownership. The Party Organs and PBOs must prioritize their work within these social forces, knowing their composition, evaluating their various sections on the basis of general Leninist criteria (i.e. their relation to the means of production, their role in the social organization of work, the manner of acquisition and the size of the share of social wealth they possess), but also on the basis of contemporary analyses—estimations of the Party, as they were formed in the two Party Bodies.

Concerning the farmers, we prioritize our intervention in those who fight for survival as individual farmers, that is, those who depend on agricultural production to make ends meet. One part of them can increase its share in the total production, either by expanding its activity, or by changing crops, or by promoting a small processing of its production; nonetheless being burdened with the totality of its debts together with its reproduction.

Overall, the relatively large stratum of self-employed farmers is maintained mainly through the payment of direct income supports, since its existence is necessary for the monopolies of processing and commerce. This stratum suffers the consequences of the capitalist exploitative economy; it is crushed by monopolies, their alliances, and state; it has an objective interest in struggling against them and, on this basis, has common interests with the working class. This part of agricultural producers still produces the largest part, mainly of agricultural production, and that is why the working class is interested in forging an alliance with it.

The Party organizations should adhere to the combined criteria we have identified, taking into account the economic size of the exploitation, the degree of expansion of wage labour —especially of permanent wage labour—, and the amount of subsidies.

Experience confirms that the effort to approach and to unionize very small agricultural producers, who maintain farms for the purpose of supplementing their income, should be done on the basis of their main employment relationship and not as farmers. The same applies to farm labourers, permanent or seasonal, who are mostly immigrants, but also to women workers in the process of sorting and packaging, who have come into contact with some women's associations and groups.

## ON OUR INTERVENTION IN THE MOVEMENTS OF THE URBAN SELF-EMPLOYED AND TOILING FARMERS, ON THEIR RADICALIZATION AND THE NATIONWIDE COORDINATION OF THE STRUGGLE

**45** . First of all, the fact that there is a very limited number of Party forces in the self-employed, and mostly in farmers, should not be considered as a deterrent to the Organs. It has been proved that we have such forces of urban self-employed and farmers in the circle of influence of the PBOs, to whom we address through our general political work; however we are not oriented towards popularizing our positions that concern them in a proper and comprehensive manner, towards leading them to be at the forefront of the founding of trade unions or to act as the vanguard in existing ones, etc.

It is confirmed that in order to take further steps at working with the allies of the working class, it is necessary to ensure the specialized Party intervention, both independently as well as in their movement, with a constant commitment to develop the struggle around their basic problems, e.g. the intervention in the self-employed should focus on issues such as taxes and debts, social insurance, etc.; the intervention in the toiling farmers should develop around the axes of production costs, income/prices, protection of production, etc.

It has been proved that with the help of elaborated demands our intervention can be well received by self-employed and toiling farmers of other political persuasions. A goal that remains to be achieved is to learn to address to the people based on the framework of struggle, the agreement on the issues raised in the movement, and the demands, in order to establish a way of work that embraces forces from different starting points who nevertheless agree on some basic issues and are willing to struggle.

We can utilize this basis in order to open up an outlook in our work, together with the overall framework of our ideological–political struggle. Preparation is needed in order to open up discussion on the causes of the problems, to relate them to the social–economic and consequently the political system, to capitalism overall, in order to respond to the notion of “national unity and productive growth” of each government, to highlight the need for stability in the direction of the content and forms of struggle, etc.

A key element is the engagement of the organs and the operation of the respective Party Groups that must focus on the thorough study of their area of responsibility, on the monitoring of the developments and the struggle, on the elaboration and specialization of frameworks and positions, on the generalization of the experience gained from our activity.

The Organs need to know how the movement is formed in terms of structure, correlation of forces, mass appeal, relations with capitalist organizations and state structures, etc. Only then we can assess to which trade union we are directing our forces —party members, supporters, etc.— and how, in relation to the intervention of capitalists, the groupings of bourgeois parties, chambers, institutes of third-level trade union organizations, cooperatives, organizations of regional and municipal administration, etc.

The Resolutions of both Party Bodies lay down the criteria in detail and clarify that the main issue is to penetrate into politically disoriented and manipulated popular forces; and not to concentrate a limited number of Party members and supporters in new trade unions through “easy” and “convenient” procedures.

An inviolable condition for the Party forces, whether they are assigned to the work among the working class or the self-employed, must be the in-depth knowledge of the strategy of the bourgeoisie and the EU, of the overall direction of their policy for the small and medium enterprises, which conjointly aims to support enterprises in certain sections and to develop the alliances of the bourgeois class. EU subsidies to toiling farmers, although not having the same effects as in the past, remain a source of illusion and disorientation, especially for landowners and producers, whose benefits essentially prolong their survival in order to ensure cheap raw material and farming having profits as a criterion for the benefit of big tradesmen–industrialists.

At the same time, it is necessary to provide appropriate guiding support to the Party Groups of the self-employed and the farmers’ associations, in order to broaden the appeal of young people and women in the respective movements.

The issue of the militant mass line of mobilization with an anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly character or even sowing the seed of radical ideas in more difficult areas requires



a relatively long-term plan with specialization, prioritization based on specific steps, and adaptations based on topicality. The communists' intervention, in combination with the corresponding measures to improve the dissemination and scope of our positions in these strata, is a complex process with both successes and setbacks.

No form of mobilization or movement can have a perpetual and unchangeable character. A form of rally may occasionally take on anti-monopoly characteristics, sometimes more shallow; at other times more advanced. The selection of the respective forms of nationwide rallies, based on the general correlation of forces mainly in third-level trade union organizations, is made with the aim of gathering trade unionists; of creating mass associations, struggle committees, and federations in an anti-monopoly direction—which in its essence is anti-capitalist—, aiming to coordinate their action. We strive to create mass and militant organizations which will expand their action, strengthening their alliance with all the oppressed, the workers, the farmers, the urban self-employed, the women, and the youth of the popular families.

All this should not be taken for granted from the beginning. It is the result of constant struggle, activity, and communication; first of all between the communists and these social forces, with their trade unions, especially the first-level ones, making an effort to keep the forms of mobilization lively and representative. As regards the joint action by rallies of different movements, such as among the PAME forces, the Nationwide Committee of the Roadblocks (PEM) among the farmers, the Attica Federation of Craftsmen (OBSA) among the self-employed, the Federation of Greek Women (OGE), the Students' Militant Front (MAS) in the student movement, and the School Students' Coordinating Committees, the communist vanguard must move flexibly, contributing to the maturation of the necessity of such a joint action, without violating the operation and the decisions of the very organs and individual rallies.

Of course, the communist vanguard is struggling to reveal the common interests of the conflict with the monopolies, the governments, the state, the EU, the consequences of the participation in NATO, and the imperialist plans in the region, being aware that it is not an easy process, nor equal for all; it contains steps forward, but also setbacks under the pressure of intimidating dilemmas, the attack of bourgeois parties, etc.

A crucial issue on which the Party should focus concerning the movement of the urban self-employed—taking into account the course and development of PASEVE and the deterioration of the correlation of forces in recent years—is the need to make improvements in the basis in order to form renewed preconditions of nationwide coordination in a radical anti-monopoly direction. This process presupposes that we strengthen the Party forces, that we gain positions and majorities in unions and federations, a goal from which we are now far away in the vast majority of urban centres.

According to the Resolution of the Nationwide Conference, today we should focus our attention on upgrading the operation and creating mass unions and federations in the administrations of which we have the majority; on paving new paths of contact with and mobilization of new forces, unions and federations; on the strengthening of contacts with unionized self-employed and other trade unionists who differ from the line of GSEVEE–ESEE; on the strengthening of ties with second-level federations, in the administrations of which forces affected by capitalists that agree in a certain direction of the struggle are in the majority; on taking initiatives that intensify the militant actions and contribute to the mobilization of new forces.

In this direction, we are oriented towards proposing new forms of coordination. At the level of Attica, we support the effort of the Attica Federation of Craftsmen (OBSA). The struggle will be radicalized to the extent that the stabilization and expansion of our forces in the large cities and the mass sectors will be combined with the immediate initiative for certain problems with the well-founded reasoning of their causes, thus with the ideological–political struggle in the movement.

Respectively, as regards the toiling farmers we seek the organization of the farmers who make ends meet as agricultural producers, per village or per group of villages, in the form of an Agricultural Association. A first step can be the establishment of a Struggle Committee, especially in a phase of mobilization. We aim to establish Federations of Agricultural Associations at a region or neighbouring regions. The detachment of the popular sections of farmers from the influence of the powerful sections cannot be schematically dealt with the



creation of an Agricultural Association which rallies mainly party members and supporters in its ranks and a very limited number of poor farmers, while the most active agricultural producers belong to another association. Of course, their approach is a demanding issue; it requires planning, flexibility, escalation of the constant ideological–political and mass intervention, of the vanguard action of the communists with an apt framework of struggle, slogans, and proposed forms of struggle.

Our forces support the Nationwide Committee of Roadblocs (PEM) and its framework of struggle, the effort to help the national coordination be expressed in more stable forms of organization and alternating forms of struggle, in the direction of the regroupment of the farmers' movement, of the constant expansion of mobilization in an anti-monopoly and anti-CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) direction. We struggle for the promotion of joint action with the working class and the urban self-employed, as a result of the acknowledgment on the part of the unions and the unionists that this how they can strengthen their struggle.

The communists have the experience to not perceive any form of nationwide trade union rally in a static manner. The key issue is to understand (based on positive and negative experience) the way how the communists should work and contribute to the organization of the struggle.

### ON THE PROMOTION OF THE JOINT ACTION OF THE WORKING CLASS WITH ITS POTENTIAL ALLIES IN THE PROSPECT OF A STRONG SOCIAL ALLIANCE

**46** . The promotion of the unity of the working class with the self-employed and the farmers, as we defined it above, is first of all the communists' task. Under their responsibility, the class-oriented labour–trade union movement will achieve more stable joint struggles in the form of organizing social forces whose social position pushes them to greater oscillation and hesitation.

It is not correct to assume that social alliance will develop from the outset on the basis of the acceptance of the demands of the working class by the popular sections of the middle strata as a sign of solidarity or because, in the final analysis, the general interests of the working class —the social ownership over the means of production— constitute social progress for these forces as well. It is also not correct to take the leading position of the working class in the alliance as given. This above-mentioned objective position of the working class in the revolutionary social progress and the social practice must be achieved, under the responsibility of its ideological–political organized vanguard.

Its achievement presupposes an understanding of the objective basis of the oscillations of the popular sections of the middle strata, the patience in the struggle to win over and to detach them from the influence of the upper middle strata and the capitalist class; it presupposes the vanguard perception and stance towards defending their income and other social needs in capitalist conditions. The fact that objectively these strata have a tendency to concentrate in the agricultural production, manufacturing, retail, hospitality–tourism etc., does not justify simplistic approaches about how their consciousness and stance are shaped. It is neither self-evident nor automatic to realize the joint interest of the working class, nor this happens without oscillations. Such perceptions and practices distort the essential and unique character of the working class, from which derives its leading role in the overthrow of capitalist power and in the construction of the new, socialist–communist one.

The way in which the bodies of the labour–trade union movement —first of all under the responsibility of the communists— address to the organizations of the self-employed and the toiling farmers an essential element that must be achieved. These bodies need to consider that they address to movements of small-owners, that is, due to their position as owners of means of production, land, and capital in commercial or financial form they cannot be a consistent revolutionary social force. Therefore, it is impossible to fully identify and align themselves with the goals and demands of the working class and, particularly, in conditions of general retreat of the movement. That is why it is necessary to elaborate a specialized line and framework of struggle and to tackle the perfunctory repetition of positions, forms of struggle and experiences gained in the labour movement.

This task is not easy in the current conditions in which the correlation of forces remains extremely negative. However, this does not mean that there are no possibilities that are

formed on the very basis of the objective development of the capitalist economy. This is evidenced by some positive efforts of joint action, where we timely formed an apt framework that facilitated joint action. First of all, the joint rallies in Athens between PEM and PAME, as well as between labour, self-employed and women's organizations on the Sunday holiday and health issues. This positive experience includes the form of struggle adopted by the self-employed to close their stores in rural areas during farmers roadblocks on national roads, the joint action for major popular problems, e.g. waste management (Menidi), fire disasters (Eastern Attica), floods (Mandra) and the "Ianos" hurricane (Karditsa), oil tanks (Perama), etc.

In some of these joint actions on major popular problems, more forms of mass organizations joined their forces (e.g. parents and school students' associations, cultural, environmental, scientific, artists' organizations), in addition to the trade unions of social allies; they took the form of broader popular rallies. In some cases, they embraced more goals of struggle in a quick way, achieving in one or the other degree a more stable communication-cooperation between mass organizations. In the period of the sharpening of the previous economic crisis, particularly in the years 2011-2014, there were forms of militant popular mobilization —People's Committees— that developed action for acute problems, e.g. the cutting-off of electrical supply in poor people's houses, the seizures of people's houses, etc. In the immediate future, the need for mass popular defence of the people's and small-professionals' properties from auctions, solidarity for survival, etc. will arise. All of these are rightful and useful forms of organization and struggle of popular forces, which should not however be considered as permanent forms of social movements and their alliance, nor should their utilization and contribution to the mobilization and integration of new forces in the movements should be underestimated.

It is a matter of the communists assigned to the trade union movement, so that the latter, through substantial collective processes (addressing executive boards, joint meetings, etc.), focuses on issues of survival and living conditions (health, social insurance, education, welfare, social infrastructure, nutritional needs and protection against natural phenomena) that concern more broadly the working class families, the majority of the self-employed and toiling farmers. It also need to support their demands for protection from auctions, seizures, etc., as well as to oppose imperialist wars, interventions and pressure. This is the way to achieve joint action, to realize its necessity and benefits.

Significant social problems are the basis for a more stable development of the joint struggle between workers' unions, farmers associations, and self-employed organizations, but also women associations and groups of OGE, bodies of self-employed scientists, artists, school and university students, to promote social alliance in practice.

The development of joint action between the associations and groups of OGE with the trade unions, the federations, the Labour Centres that are already rallied in PAME, but also with trade unions and unionists with whom we seek to come into contact, could help so that the positions and demands of employees are incorporated into the positions and the operation of unions, so that the participation of women in these organizations is increased. The same applies to the relationship of OGE associations and groups with farmers' associations, bodies of the school and university students' movement, with bodies of the urban self-employed as an inclusion of positions and demands for the equality and emancipation of women.

In any case, the promotion of social alliance presupposes the expansion of the forces rallied in PAME, but also the improvement of the communists' positions in the farmers' movement and especially in the movement of the urban self-employed, in order for farmers' associations and federations and associations-unions-federations of urban self-employed to be formed and to be freed from capitalist influence. The special work that needs to be done in the bodies of the self-employed and the toiling farmers must be planned, in order to establish this participation, to mobilize active forces and not just to ensure a formal decision.

#### THE LEADING RESPONSIBILITY

**47** . All the above presuppose the separately planned implementation of the ideological-political intervention in the farmers and the urban self-employed, based on the corresponding measures (allocation of tasks in the

Organs, creation of PBOs, discussion in the PBOs); their central support, with propaganda material, articles, inner-party notes about positions, criticism against other forces, interventions in the Parliament, in the Municipal and Regional Councils, etc.

Particular political guidance attention is needed for the emergence of trade unionists, for their communist steeling through their participation in all forms of class struggles, for the development of their communist consciousness through inner-Party educational schools, seminars, etc. A programme of specialized Party visits, meetings, and events is needed as well. There is need for a recruitment programme, prioritizing the sector, the village, and the cultivation that has a relative potential, where we must organize forces, to form a Party Group that will be at the forefront of getting in contact with associations or founding ones.

Special work is required regarding vanguard farmers, those who can understand that the future of agricultural production, of production overall, lies neither in the individual producer and tradesman nor in the capitalist farmer, but in the large, industrialized agricultural production, under social ownership and a central plan; that the agricultural productive cooperative is step in the preparation of a section of small farmers. Correspondingly, special work is required for the urban self-employed, particularly for the self-employed scientists as well as for craftsmen in new dynamic sectors.

Cadres are needed at all levels, from the CC to the PBO Bureau, capable of orienting Organs and PBOs, to guide elected representatives on the administrative boards of mass organizations of farmers and urban self-employed.

## CHAPTER E

### ON THE ACTIVITY OF COMMUNIST WOMEN IN THE RADICAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT (OGE)

**48** . In terms of mass movement, communist women are active in the women's associations of OGE, which is a nationwide radical women's organization with a history going back 44 years. It is the women's organization that since its foundation opposes the classless approach of inequalities to the detriment of women, the one-sided orientation to problems faced by women regarding legislation and behaviour on the part of men. Of course, communist women participating in this mass organization cannot consider that the mobilization of women is based on a unified political perception nor on the degree of awareness of women's inequality. The unifying element is—at least in the central intervention of OGE—the class view of the problems of women's inequality, of the acute popular problems overall, the militant demand of women's contemporary needs, and the participation in the workers'—people's struggles.

The orientation of several leading bodies towards increasing the participation of women Party members in OGE, starting from sectoral and KNE organizations, as well as creating new OGE groups in some areas, was expressed to a certain extent in the rise of the mobilization of women in the associations and groups of OGE, in comparison with the previous congress of OGE. However, not all opportunities have been used to reach working women, mothers, and younger women, particularly students, who are not politically affiliated with the Party. It is necessary to surmount the difficulty of illustrating the objective situation of the associations and groups of OGE and their administrative boards to the Party Organs. This can be achieved through the substantial operation of the Party Groups of women's associations and the creative monitoring of the contribution of communist women in the radical women's movement. Under their responsibility, it is necessary to improve our understanding of this movement's role, which, after the pandemic, should enter a new phase of development, overcoming the problems that arose by the pandemic. The Party and KNE members need to be at the forefront of holding mass meetings of the associations and groups of OGE, generating lively discussion and activity on the occasion of the upcoming congress, which was postponed.

Communist women who participate at a national level in other bodies of the women's movement as well need to secure that the activity of the administrative board is oriented towards the participation of women workers, employees, urban self-employed and farmers in the associations and groups of OGE. Although our work showed differences from one region to another, in the previous period the associations and groups of OGE developed a multifaceted militant activity with steady work in retail, health, and other sectors. This activity focused on the demands for the universal social right of women to work, for

the social responsibility of protecting motherhood and supporting family, for the equal participation of women in social life and activity.

The various central elaborations and the activity of the radical women's movement to inform women and encourage them to struggle for their demands had a significant contribution to the specialization of the communists' work among women. This activity was based on the triad of stable employment–income from employment–social services, upon which the quality of life and free time depend, demanding permanent and stable work, fixed working hours, the abolition of flexible working conditions, the defence of the Sunday holiday, against the bourgeois state, bourgeois institutions, and capitalist employers. The discussion of these demands forms criteria; it reveals the economic and social causes that are responsible for the non-satisfaction of the contemporary social needs of women, taking into account their special needs due to their role in the reproductive process, highlighting today's possibilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This shows its uniqueness as a radical women's movement, which, not only does not come into conflict with the labour–trade union movement and other radical social movements (of the urban self-employed, of farmers), but also cooperates and struggles with them to increase the participation of working women in the workers'–people's struggles.

An important front of ideological–political work among women, which requires further specialization, is the revealing and denunciation of imperialist interventions, of NATO, of foreign bases in Greece, of the relatively recent US–Greek agreements; the joint action with EEDYE; the front against drug use, often in joint action with respective organizations; the expression of solidarity with refugees and particularly women and children.

The leading organs and Party Groups of associations and groups of OGE need to study the conclusions drawn from OGE campaigns in recent years. They have helped to open the discussion with more women at workplaces, universities, and neighbourhoods, about the framework of struggle which highlights that the problems that women face in every aspect of their social life are related to the convergence of female inequality and class division of society, of capitalist exploitation.

The leading bodies need to show resolve in the mobilization of female students in the radical women's movement, for its joint action with students' unions, something that can be achieved by raising the awareness of members and friends of the KNE in universities.

The Bulletin of OGE can be utilized in a more efficient way by women cadres and Party members, regardless of their assignments, but also from Party groups of unions in sectors with an increased participation of women (e.g. Retail, Services, Telecommunications, Tourism, Health, Education). It is a form that can enlighten working class women on issues of contemporary women's social needs, for instance, health and especially the needs for Primary Healthcare Facilities, the friendship of the peoples as opposed to imperialist interventions, and the solidarity with refugees, seeking to promote militant demands and initiatives. Especially in recent years, the Bulletin has been upgraded in terms of content and form, it has been enriched with articles about workplaces by women trade unionists.

The leading bodies need to engage in orienting communist women in the administrative boards of women's associations for the development of joint action with unions, associations of the self-employed, and farmers' associations, so that their intervention acquires substantial content. An effort was made in this direction at the occasion of the International Women's Day in 2020, which had certain good results in Attica and more poor results in Thessaloniki, Thessaly, and Crete. It partly contributed to disseminate positions and demands for women employees in the life and operation of trade unions. It is necessary to utilize the nationwide experience of the joint action that has been accumulated in Attica, where more stable steps are being made in this direction, mainly in retail, with the development of joint action for the issue of Sunday Holiday with the Attica Federation of Craftsmen (OBSA).

Particularly during the period of restrictive measures, the need arose for the guiding organs to support the intervention of communist women in the administrative boards and women's associations, taking into account the difficulties they encounter in their operation, in order to develop a multifaceted activity and initiative on every problem that the people face, as was expressed during the days of nationwide action in Health, in Retail, in Hospitality–Tourism, etc.

## ON THE STRUGGLE IN THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (WIDF)

**49**. The existing correlation of forces reflects the participation of a large number of organizations in a social democratic direction and the negative condition of the communist movement, as in many countries the CPs have not developed an orientation of the work of communist women towards the creation and mobilization of radical women's organizations. At the same time, many WIDF organizations, in some cases even those who are affiliated with the Communist Parties, adopt positions that reproduce erroneous views and an integration policy of the women's movement.

A new element of the past period is that more and more women's organizations of the WIDF adopt the bourgeois and opportunistic views of the feminist current in the women's movement, as well as of the views on "social gender". Through the intervention of the OGE, the need was stressed to strengthen the radical orientation in the women's movement with mass women's organizations based on women's associations and their members. Their militant action needs to support the interests and demands of the women of a working class—popular social position or background. We estimate that in the context of the WIDF, the forces of OGE confronted the orientation of several women's organizations that support mainly bourgeois social democratic governments, as opposed to the liberal mixture of bourgeois management as well as to the imperialist unions. From this point of view, they showed resolve in the need to denounce the US–NATO–EU imperialist plans, in the stance of women's organizations against imperialist interventions to reject the bourgeois bargaining and the entrapment in various imperialist centres. Under these difficult circumstances, the forces of OGE sought joint action with other organizations.

### CHAPTER F

## THE WORK OF THE KKE AND THE KNE AMONG THE YOUTH OF WORKING CLASS FAMILIES

**50**. The intervention of the Party and KNE in the young men and women of working class families can provide a substantial way out of the concerns about their present and future. This ideological–political intervention — through the action and elaboration of content and forms of struggle in the mass movement— can be decisive so that the problems that the young men and women encounter in their effort for education, work, creative use of free time, in the development of social activity, personal relationships, in starting a family, etc to become a seedbed of demands, of collective organized action, of rights, in order to struggle for their contemporary needs.

A detailed reference was made in the previous chapters to the young workers, as part of the working class of the country that is of particular importance for the course of the labour movement. The Party is equally interested and engaged in the young men and women in all levels of education, who, in the near future, will mainly join the ranks of salaried employees as well as of the self-employed, of the allied strata of the working class.

Since the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress, struggles have been developed that encouraged initiatives by Party and KNE forces, both at an independent level and in mass organizations, which of course showed differences in the level of the mobilization of the masses (school student struggles, university students' uprisings, mobilizations of substitute teachers, participation of parents in students' rallies, etc.). Some more permanent positive features emerge in our perception of the communists' intervention in the movement, especially in the field of Education, which need to be maintained and expanded as a way of thinking and acting.

It can be concluded that the work based on our programmatic specializations in each field and educational level contributes decisively to the ability to elaborate goals of struggle while taking lively action within the movement. It provides us with the possibility to address the government policy in the field of Education in a class-oriented and well reasoned manner. It also helps to promote a number of new issues or problems that acutely arise in the field of Education, even though they express problems of the development of bourgeois society (e.g. poor language skills, bullying, the impact of capitalist utilization of the Internet on young people's consciousness).

The above conclusions were confirmed also in relation to school students' struggles, where the issue of the ideological substructure of young communists became a necessary



element as well as a factor that provided the movement with resilience and perspective.

Our forces, first and foremost the leading organs, have made steps in understanding that the educational issue must be addressed as a social-political issue, both in terms of general theoretical positioning and of formation and elaboration of goals of struggle that unite the individual movements and organizations in the field of Education.

### **THE ACTIVITY OF KNE IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS, VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (EPAL), VOCATIONAL AND APPRENTICESHIP SCHOOLS**

**51** . Objectively, due to the large concentration of young people in schools (junior and senior high schools, EPAL), KNE has a special responsibility for specializing the intervention in this field, as well as for collecting and studying the experience.

Since the last Congress, progress was made in the coordination of the KNE Organizations with the respective Party Organizations for the revitalization of the school students' movement. Of course, the situation in school students' councils, in the "heart" of the student movement, remains weak while the effort of the government, state apparatus, and other political parties to intervene in their content and operation has intensified.

All these years, KNE, through its elected members and friends, has played the leading role in the school students councils, so that they function as instruments of struggle for the acute problems and the needs of the school students; it intervenes, more or less, in all schools of the country.

The ongoing changes in the school and especially in the examination system are a key factor in the development of the struggles. The increasingly ossified knowledge provided by school, the monotonous and stressful daily life that creates stress to the students, is the ground on which the KNE and the Party worked, utilizing the position on the "Unified Twelve-Year School of General Education", i.e. the updated pamphlet which was elaborated by the School Students' Committee of the Central Council. Our intervention, among others, has given rise to discussion and reflection on the opposition to military interventions, to actions of solidarity with their victims and refugees, and generally to actions against fascism, racism, and the marginalization of people on the basis of sex, religion, sexual orientation, as well as on environmental issues, the use of free spaces, etc. In all the above issues, our forces are faced with the multifaceted intervention of the class enemy which is unfolds in many fields and is adapted for these age groups.

There remains an urgent need to take more decisive steps in sharpening the ideological struggle against the prevailing ideology, which is expressed both in schoolbooks as well as in various school programs, by a wide range of sponsors, inspirers, staffs (NGOs, embassies etc.) and more and more projects.

It was confirmed that it is the multifaceted action of the elected members and friends of KNE in their school and their classroom for everything that concerns the school student community that gives militant characteristics to the student councils, enhances their operation, raises the level of collective discussion and the organization of school students and consolidates our own forces.

In this way, it is possible to exert influence on a permanent basis both on the content and the framework of demands adopted by the school student movement in various phases as well as on the establishment of new forms of organization of the student movement, mainly that of the Coordinating Committees of Schools in municipalities. The forces of KNE support the Coordinating Committee of the School Students of Athens, which has been widely recognized, while its action has been recognized at a national level.

This effort must be further supported by the coordinated action of our forces among parents and teachers nationwide, by region or school unit.

The mobilizations of school students before the second wave of the pandemic are of great importance for the confrontation with the government over health issues. Significant conclusions have been drawn, especially in relation to the elaboration of the demands, the slogans, the escalation and alternation of forms of struggle, the activity of the KNE forces with arguments that responded to the considerations of school students improving the cooperation with party organizations, parents and teachers. It was proved that sought to characterize the student struggles as a "movement against masks" as part of a more general plan.



Without underestimating the weaknesses, certain conditions have been created to make substantial progress in the expansion of the KNE's links in schools, with the promotion of its members to student councils, to the coordinating committees which have been established through their activity. It is very important to support this work throughout the next period, through a multifaceted activity, to give emphasis on the BOs of school students, their content, on the possibility to open new ways for our contact with students, with the eye to the school units.

It is important for the school students who are members of KNE to continue playing the leading role in the creation and strengthening of militant spirit, to recruit, to engage themselves more actively and confidently in the political confrontation, with the necessary adjustment to the social experience of these age groups. The work of the Party and KNE leading organs, which is more demanding in comparison to the previous years, can provide assistance in this direction.

### SPECIFICALLY ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

**52**. Our work in Vocational Education and Apprenticeship is a work with an outlook to the future regarding the working class, the regroupment of the labour movement, and also the work aiming at intervening in the self-employed. We have still a long way to go when it comes to the coordination of the Party and KNE as per school, sector, specialization and region. The CC Departments, the Party Groups of the Federations, the Labour Centres and the sectoral trade unions, together with the KNE forces, should have a plan for monitoring, elaborating issues and intervening, and finally a plan for building organizations in Vocational Education.

Especially the students in vocational upper-secondary schools (EPAL), as a section of the school students' movement, have actively participated in students' struggles for common problems over the past years. Due to the downgrade of their studies, the difficulties in acquiring a vocational-technical specialization definitely affect the development of a militant mood. Our intervention in vocational upper-secondary schools (EPAL) can be enhanced regarding those issues based as well on our updated position on Vocational Education. It is an area of special importance since their very class origin affects them, while it is not unusual for these students to work while at school. We need to take into consideration the targeted drug trafficking, the activities of various rings and various football fan clubs, etc.

In recent years, there has been a more active and mass presence in the procedures of the Students' Unions of Public Institutes Of Vocational Training, of the assemblies at schools, with the decisive intervention of the KNE forces and young and inexperienced forces that need significant support.

### ON THE STUDENTS' MOVEMENT AT UNIVERSITIES

**53**. The efforts of the Party and KNE within the students' movement were made under special conditions. However, it has been proved to be a demanding task. The development of our organized forces at universities, the strengthening of the multifaceted ideological and political intervention linked to the each-time discipline, the study of the experience from our intervention to develop militant and combative processes over the previous period are all decisive factors that can help progress the militant regroupment of the students' movement in an anti-monopoly and anti-capitalist orientation.

Any positive steps taken have the stamp of our forces, but they are not solid. The students' movement is still in a deep crisis and retreat. Apart from the long-term absence of an organized structure, the low participation in the movement processes, the line of consensus and compromise with the dominant policy through the opponent's multifaceted intervention, a more intense effort to slander the students' struggles was thrown into the mix by using various ways. The degeneration was also intensified due to the fact that there were no mass procedures (general assemblies, students' elections, etc.) for about a year due to the universities being basically closed since the pandemic outbreak. At the same time, the legal repressive framework has been enhanced and still is enhanced to prevent any positive processes in the struggles and the radicalization of consciousness. Further attempts to dissolve the movement by utilizing electronic voting is also amongst their

priorities.

These years the strengthening of the Students' Struggle Front (MAS) with new unions expresses certain positive elements that were developed in the students' unions. Today, 11 years after its foundation, important steps have been made for its establishment and its wide recognition amongst the students. That is also reflected in the fact that it affiliates a higher number of students' unions (69 students' unions, unions of former Technological Educational Institutes–TEI, associations of boarding students and some struggle committees, year committees, etc.). This increase mostly results from a more favourable correlation of forces in the administrative boards of the unions in which Panspoudastiki KS (the list of KNE at universities) was first in elections.

These unions have been at the forefront of the efforts to coordinate and have a joint action and demands, and have contributed in the direction to organize the students' movement to respond to the mounting governmental policies against the students' rights.

The experience gathered in certain organizations, from the elaboration of frameworks of struggle and demands and agitation on specific issues can be generalized and used for guidance purposes. Caring about the sum total of the student's life, the terms of studies, education, degree, professional prospects; about issues of science and research, recreation, sports, culture is a direction that can help in mobilizing broader forces, and, in many cases, in highlighting and demanding the contemporary needs of the students. We can cultivate more decisively ideological excellence to the members, especially of KNE, which will be based on Marxist education and knowledge, the ability to keep track of each discipline and develop critical thinking. Our members should be distinguished in all of the above, graft radical–revolutionary ideas onto young issues and concerns, and have a positive impact on the progress of the movement.

Of course, we do not forget that this elaborated work has yet to reach the grassroots of the movement, has yet to massively reach the students, and this is also concerning the unions in which MAS participates.

That is a guidance issue to be achieved and is basically the assistance that the Party and KNE members at Universities need. Assistance so that the efforts to agitate, inform, confront other forces on the struggle orientation, and —of course— have militant action are not fragmentary.

We should not underestimate the discussion on the value of the struggle and collective and trade union organization, on the need to have a students' union with a mass students' participation, which is a weapon in the militant, collective and organized struggle for their rights. All the above should be highlighted through a multifaceted activity at all levels (on the future of the graduates, activities based on each discipline, issues of Culture, Sports, History, etc.), having also in mind that this is a responsibility that first and foremost is placed on our forces that have the majority in administrative boards. There is a need for greater support in the effort to build mass unions, to change the correlation of forces where we are the minority; in the study and utilization of the substructures formed in the students' movement; in the possibility of creating forms of organization at a year and faculty-level, especially where there is a complete absence of collective struggle due to the dissolution of unions; in the process of establishing new unions at the former TEI.

#### **OUR ATTENTION IS TURNED TOWARDS THE OVERALL LIFE OF THE YOUTH**

**54** . The struggle of the Party and KNE members, particularly within the youth movements, is an integral component of the struggle for culture and sports, generally for creative and quality use of free time, recreation, the right to holidays, etc. We aim to spread a wider and more multifaceted activity that shall come to conflict with the consequences of the domination of commercialization and the fact that for many youngsters the above is today an expensive “luxury” or a hobby for those who have the time to do it. It shall also oppose the attempt to exploit them in many ways to promote the values and standards of capitalism, competition, the bourgeois ideology.

From this point of view, it is necessary to monitor the developments as a whole and to intervene at a central political level. But it is even more imperative to focus on how to integrate these fronts to the demands of the mass movement, how to work within cultural, local associations, sports clubs and sports areas, how to also develop other initiatives such as cultural centres for the youth among others, sports activities that shall gather forces

and send a combative message. The initiatives we sporadically develop are very successful, however there is not an integrated plan in most of the Organizations.

### STRUGGLE AGAINST ALL DRUGS

**55** . The policy of the bourgeoisie towards the social phenomenon of drug addiction follows the axis of “legalization”, repression, “less harm”, generalization of heroin substitutes provision in Supervised Drug Consumption Areas and the unscientific distinction of drugs into “hard” and “soft”. It essentially aims to manage the problem, not to confront it.

As a Party we have made steps in strengthening the ideological–political and social front against dissemination of drugs and the lifestyle they represent.

We shall focus on:

a) The strengthening of a broad discussion within the movement and its structures (workers’ unions, youth organizations, Parents’ Associations, sports and cultural unions), highlighting the causes of the phenomenon.

b) The study of the consequences of addiction on the formation of consciousness and action in young people, but also how a perception of tolerance is formed among people who occasionally consume drugs or not consume at all, a fact that has a multiplying effect and negatively affects familiarity with the phenomenon.

c) The integrated promotion of the framework of demands and claims put forward by the KKE and KNE across the spectrum of prevention, treatment, social reintegration and research, which focuses on the causes of the phenomenon and the actual human needs.

d) Highlighting the fact that only workers’ power is fully capable of eliminating addiction to psychoactive substances and for this reason the KKE has already formed a programme about how the workers’ power will respond to this social phenomenon.

### EPILOGUE

**56** . The KKE undertakes great tasks for the regroupment of the working class movement, for the formation of the social alliance. The Central Committee considers that along with the negative developments, there are also reserves in the movement, various points of resistance that we should help to be revealed and dynamically expressed. The responsibility of the Party, of all its members and cadres increases.

We struggle to create mass organizations in the organized trade union movement; we are at the forefront of conflict with fatalism and fear, frustration and conservatism, all reactionary perceptions that are strengthening.

We are at the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The hard work of the communists, the militants together with whom we struggle to achieve our goals, all our individual initiatives, shall show that no version of anti-peoples’ bourgeois management in Greece, in Europe and in the whole world can give an answer and solution to the main problem: Today, while there is a full potential to improve the standard of living for millions of workers in our country and around the world, the results are just the opposite.

The gap, between how employees can live today and how they eventually live is growing. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the studied experience together with the objective development of societies can lead us to the new society, if the peoples aim at it, if we decide to show our real power. The people have not yet tested their strength, so there should be no disappointment concerning the effectiveness of the struggles: The preparation of forces for the workers’ and people’s counterattack is paramount.

Within the struggle for the satisfaction of the actual peoples’ needs, the struggle against the imperialist war and the participation of our country in the imperialist unions and plans, we can have a common pace with thousands of workers; we can cause cracks to the rotten exploitative system, to compromise and fatalism; we can build a great social alliance, not only to demand relief from the actual acute problems, but also to create the necessary preconditions for a radical overthrow, for socialism–communism.

Athens, 25.1.2021

The CC of the KKE