

Call for international Action Day on the 1st of May

The Class Struggle Knows No Borders!

If we see the signs right, we're about to live through a stage of populism unparalleled in recent decades. The result is a world where the workers are divided and oppressed through nationalist and racist rhetoric. Against the project of a world full of new walls running along borders and through our minds, we need a project to tear down all walls and instead connect workers to organize solidarity and mutual aid. We have no more time to cultivate differences – let's instead search for what connects our struggles for better living conditions and for a world without exploitation and oppression.

The FAU calls on all individuals, initiatives, collectives, grassroots trade unions, etc. to participate in an international action day on "Work and Migration". On the 1st of May we would like to express class solidarity with migrants by mobilizing across borders against the dominant xenophobia, racism and nationalism, which are weapons of the state and capital. Our struggle against racism is logically directed against the capitalist system, which is based on extreme inequalities and is dependent on social divisions to ensure its continuity.

The ones particularly affected by exploitation and deprivation of rights in our society are migrant workers, who – as a consequence of the racist immigration policy – have to stomach illegal employment, work prohibition or forced labor. Employed primarily in the gastronomy, cleaning and construction sector, with a low union membership level (or none at all), they hardly have any possibility to fight against the increasing precariousness of their working conditions. The established unions, based on social partnership, show limited interest in organizing (illegal) migrants, or to support them in their fight for the right to stay and against legal obstacles. On the contrary, their focus on the regular staff and the logic of the national economy deepens social divisions.

It is necessary to counteract this deplorable state of affairs with solidarity and self-organization – as in the case of our colleagues from Romania, who were exploited on the construction site of the shopping center Mall of Berlin. Forced to work and live under horrible conditions they were cheated of their wages and threatened. Their membership in the FAU and the labor struggle that followed led to the shopping mall being renamed Mall of Shame, which from that day on became a symbol of migrant exploitation in Germany. By way of this successful resistance against exploitation, we were able to respond to the social climate of hate, especially against migrant workers from South-Eastern Europe. We also see current attempts in Germany to force refugees to perform underpaid work both as an attempt to segregate refugees and to lower labor standards, which of course negatively affects all the workers. As the working class we should show our resistance and solidarity, and fight not only for the freedom of movement for everybody, but also against exploitation legitimated by racism. Class struggle knows no borders!

In the tradition of the 1st of May we call for solidarity with migrant workers in order to protest against precarious working conditions, against capitalist exploitation and for no borders. No matter what form these protests take – strike, rally, information campaign, event, performance; whether local or supraregional; regardless of whether you are a worker, unemployed, students, pensioners, migrants or refugees: it is important that everyone organize against exploitation. Only with international solidarity and cross-border trade unionism can we resist capitalism. Join us in carrying out this day of action on the 1st May under the slogan „Class struggle knows no borders!“. Together we will build bridges where others want to build walls.

The International Committee of FAU

P.S. If you have any questions, please contact us. We are open to all ideas, suggestions and comments or alternatives. We will be pleased to receive any feedback on the participation in the action day: mai2017@fau.org