**GTUC Information**

**An agreement was reached between the trade unions and Tbilisi City Hall on August 7**

After two days of rallies, the trade unions and the Tbilisi City Hall agreed to increase the salaries of “Tbilservice” employees from January, and to solve the existing problems within 21 days.

Negotiations, in which GTUC affiliate organization - Service, Communal and Bank Workers trade Union were directly involved the following issues: 1. inviolability of those expressing protest; 2. Cancelation of the planned schedule within the current reorganization and return to the existing schedule; 3. The issues of employee insurance from January 1, 2022; 4. Additional paid leave on top of 24 working days; 5. renewal of special clothes; 6. renewal of special equipment (auto fleet); 7. Wage increase. The agreement was to be signed on the issue, taking into account the specific deadlines.

We would like to remind that on August 6, a protest action was held by the employees of Tbilservice Ltd., which was caused by the change of the employees' work schedule and working conditions. 2 days later, the protest with the involvement of trade unions ended with a concrete result and an agreement. Employees resumed work at full capacity.

#### Trade unions launch lawsuit against employment agency - 13 August

The GTUC has filed a lawsuit against the State Employment Promotion Agency on behalf of 11 people employed for seasonal work In Germany.

The GTUC demands that the Employment Agency to be charged with : the salary to be paid to the plaintiffs for the work performed in May 2021 in the amount of GEL 4553.12 in favor of each plaintiff; salary for June and July 2021 in the amount of GEL 10,786.68; compensation for moral damages in the amount of 3000 GEL.

We should mention that the agreement between Georgia and Germany on seasonal work in Germany on employment of Georgian labor force was signed last year. According to the document, those selected from Georgia should have been employed in seasonal work in the agricultural sector for at least 30 hours a week. However, the selected candidates were met with unsuitable conditions, working environment and very small pay unexpected in Germany. They had to live in unhygienic, dirty, degrading and dangerous conditions. Their pay written in the contract amounted to 9.30 EUR per hr that at that time was lower than a minimum salary envisaged by the law in Germany.

Working conditions were also difficult: the employer failed to provide them with equipment in a timely manner. With clothes, not fulfilling the obligation stipulated in the contract, the employees were burdened with full-time work. Despite the affected citizens’ demands for relevant response from the state, the State Agency for Employment Promotion became active only after one of the plaintiffs, Jemal Chachanidze, began providing information to the public and the Georgian Trade Union Confederation. The GTUC, in its turn, provided information to the German Trade Union Confederation, the German Embassy in Georgia, the Georgian and German media, the German Labor Inspection Services, Georgian Embassy in Germany and the Georgian Minsitry of Labour, Healthcase and Social Affairs. etc. Due to the ineffective response of the State Agency, the plaintiffs suffered material and moral damage. They also failed to receive remuneration in the form of unearned income, which they would have received if the agency had properly complied with its obligations to inform plaintiffs and monitor employment conditions.

Tamila Gabaidze, a lawyer with the Georgian Trade Union Confederation, is representing the plaintiffs in court

#### Impact of the pandemic on Labour Market and Employee Status - 15 August

The Impact of the Pandemic on the Labor Market and Employee Status - The Georgian Trade Union Confederation presented the study online, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Rule of Law Support Program in Georgia (PROLoG), conducted by the East-West Management Institute (EWMI).

[Research](http://gtuc.ge/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GTUC-Report-ENG.pdf)

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#### Memorandum Signed between the Georgian Trade Unions Confederation and Tbilisi Transport Company - September 24

Another successful negotiation of the GTUC - the salary fund of the Tbilisi Transport Company will be increased by 18 million GEL from January 1, 2022.

The memorandum was signed by the GTUC President Irakli Petriashvili and the General Director of the Tbilisi Transport Company Giorgi Sharkov in the GTUC conference hall. The agreement includes:

From January 1, 2022, the salary fund will increase by 15% (by 18 million GEL). Wage increases should be differentiated by the involvement of the trade unions. From January 1, 2022, the fund will increase for the supplement of employees working in hard and hazardous conditions by 15%. In subsequent tenders announced for employee health insurance, the insurance co-financing fund will be set at GEL 100,000 instead of GEL 50,000. In case of the birth of the child, trade union members should be given a one-time amount of 300 GEL (in cash). If both parents are employed by the company, this benefit will be paid in favor of one of the parents. Employees working in shifts in the structural units of the metropolitan will be given a 1-hour break while maintaining their existing pay. The tariff for years of service in the company should be equal to the highest tariff set in the company (2.35). The Company and the GTUC affiliate organizations (Trade Union of Transport and Road Workers and the Tbilisi Metro Workers’ Trade Union) shall ensure that the terms and conditions set forth in the above paragraphs and the agreements reached in recent years are reflected in the collective agreement.

**The GTUC XIV Congress**

**Irakli Petriashvili elected as GTUC President - October 7**

Irakli Petriashvili was elected as the Georgian Trade Unions Confederation (GTUC) President by the 14th Congress of the GTUC.

213 delegates from 22 sectoral trade union organizations were registered at the Congress. 200 delegates took part in the congress. Irakli Petriashvili was supported by 184 delegates, 3 were against and 9 votes were declared void.

The congress elects the GTUC president once in four years. In order to elect a trade union chairman, one of the candidates must receive more than half (50 + 1%) of the votes of the delegates participating in the congress.

During the presidency of Irakli Petriashvili, a fundamental reform of trade unions was carried out, as a result of which the fight for the rights and interests of workers began intensively.

Irakli Petriashvili is also the President of the Pan-European Regional Council of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC PERC).

Irakli Petriashvili has announced about further reforms, aspects that will be oriented on improvement of communication with members and the public and also on heightening of the solidarity among the affiliate organizations.

**The meeting of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission was held on November 19**

On November 19, a meeting of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission was held, which was attended by the Georgian Trade Unions Confederation. At the commission meeting was discussed important issues such as:

List of sectors with specific work regime, list of high-risk, hard, harmful and hazardous jobs, involvement of business and trade unions in the process of vaccination support, problematic issues related to collective bargaining / mediation, trade union initiative on minimum wage.

The Tripartite Commission adopted a recommendation according to which:

Practices of trade union discrimination and collective labour disputes should be discussed in the format of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission, whose main function is to develop social partnerships, as well as to facilitate social dialogue between employees, employers and the Government of Georgia at all levels.

The state, together with the social partners, should take measures to raise the awareness of state officials about the fundamental standards of the ILO, including the importance of social dialogue.

The state, with the involvement of the social partners, should take measures to encourage social dialogue at all levels (regional, city, etc.).

The unions raised the issue of the minimum wage, which has been only 20 GEL per month for more than 20 years, and the state has never reconsidered its amount despite repeated trade union initiatives. The GTUC reviewed in detail the wage policy situation in the country in this regard and in general, and made the following recommendations:

The Parliament of Georgia to ratify the International Labor Organization Convention # 131 of 1970;

To amend the Organic Law of Georgia - the Labour Code of Georgia and to add a definition of the minimum wage;

When determining the amount of the minimum wage, its ratio to the average wage in the country should be taken into account and it should be set at least 30% of the average wage;

The amount of the minimum wage should be set both hourly and monthly, so as not to reduce part-time jobs;

The Organic Law of Georgia - the Labour Code of Georgia should define the mechanism of annual revision of the minimum wage. The obligation to review the minimum wage annually should be assigned to the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission, which will develop recommendations and submit them to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will be obliged to set the minimum wage annually, taking into account the recommendations of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission;

The control over the payment of the minimum wage should be exercised by the Labour Inspection.

In addition, the minimum wage is considered by trade unions to be the most important means of combating gender pay inequality.

**GTUC involved in a 16-day campaign against violence against women - November 25**

The Georgian Trade Union Confederation is involved in a 16-day campaign “violence against women” through a number of activities. Studies and relevant recommendations have been prepared, with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by women employed in the informal sector and the care economy.

The GTUC addressed a special statement to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia calling for concrete steps to be taken to end violence and harassment in the workplace and for the ratification of the 190th ILO Convention.

[**Statement in detail**](http://gtuc.ge/profkavshirebi-qalta-mimar-dzaladobis/)