



Korkedvezményes Nyugdíjasok Országos Érdekvédelmi Egyesülete

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Dear Director General,

I would like to inform you that for a long time law enforcement employees and those who had worked in jobs that endangered health could enter early retirement after 25 years of service. The current Hungarian government, abusing its 2/3rd majority in parliament, took away this legal opportunity from everybody 57 years old or younger who had already been retirees for a long time. Early retirement status was not a temporary but a permanent one equal to the old-age retirement status. According to the new law, instead of guaranteed pensions former early retirees receive a monthly subsidy that can be reduced or taken away anytime if the government wishes so.

The Hungarian government misled public opinion and communicated lies in the media. Their decision was definitely political, putting pressure on former early retirees, depicting them enemies and making their lives impossible. On behalf of the National Association of Early Retirees (AER) of Hungary I would like to kindly inform you that our petition is before the relevant committee of the EP. Our petition is about the fact that the current Hungarian government, abusing its 2/3rd majority in parliament, took away the legal opportunity from everybody 57 years old or younger to enter early retirement. Please note that the affected individuals had already been retirees for a long time. Early retirement status was not a temporary but a permanent one equal to the old-age retirement status. According to the new law, instead of guaranteed pensions former early retirees receive a monthly subsidy that can be reduced or taken away anytime if the government wishes so.

In Hungary, laws made it possible for time law enforcement employees and those who had worked in jobs that endangered health could enter early retirement after 25 years of service. Once again, I'd like to emphasize that this was not a temporary retirement status but equal to the old-age retirement status!

We believe that institutions like the European Union and the EP in particular which protect and enforce principles of our European community in member states can help our members regain their pensions that they had obtained originally legally and legitimately. As citizens of the EU we think it is our fair request and expectation.

I'd like to kindly inform you that we have been tilting at windmills with the Hungarian government for almost three years and we have tried to get the support of various European institutions for our fight but we have failed so far. We think that regarding our case the European Commission translated the "acquis communautaire" in a rather strange way that is why we would like to ask for your support.

We would like to get an answer to the following questions:

1. Why is it part of "social security reform" to deprive those of their pensions in 2011 who, according to the law, retired earlier in 2004? These people are not pensioners anymore and all of their allowances are taken away.
2. Why didn't the European Commission consider this measure of the Hungarian government a retroactive act? Retroactive lawmaking is unacceptable by international law against which the EU is fighting, isn't it?
3. Why isn't an already legitimately obtained pensioner status a vested right? Doesn't the EU protect vested rights?
4. Being retroactively deprived of our vested rights (i.e. pension) we lost several benefits such as:
 - (a) Right to have funeral,
 - (b) Right for medical treatment,
 - (c) Right to have a job,
 - (d) Right to get bank credits (note: our pension-turned-into-subsidy is not considered a monthly wage).

The Hungarian government does not want to negotiate with us. They have not accepted any of our invitations for discussion. We are fighting for our rights: we want to get back what was once already ours.

5. We can say that a political decision was made by the Hungarian government, as we detailed it in our petition:
 - (a) he government wanted to influence public opinion by calling us names (e.g. lazy, people with monumental pension, people taking away jobs from others, parasite etc.),
 - (b) The state secretary of the Ministry of Justice called us „hussars of the Kádár-regime,
 - (c) The government promised us re-employment but they failed to so.

In sum I believe that it was not a coincidence that the relevant EP committee left our petition hanging.

