

2.6 Industrial and Employee Relations



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2.6 INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS: ASSESSMENT

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow.

HIGHER EDUCATION STRIKES TROUBLE IN ATHENS



What a difference a crisis can make. The same Greek students who used to stage months-long sit-ins to press for a bigger say in running university affairs are now desperate to get back to studying. Collective bargaining has broken down, and now a strike by unionised administrative staff has shut Athens University and the Athens polytechnic, the country's best higher-education institutions, for 13 weeks. New undergraduates have been unable to register for courses, let alone attend classes.

The strike involves about half the 1,150 administrators and support staff at eight state universities, whose jobs have been cut under the government's drive to reduce the public payroll. Instead of being dismissed immediately, they are to join a "mobility scheme" for 25,000 public-sector workers. If they cannot find other state jobs within eight months they will be sacked. It took the troika of international lenders—the European Commission, European Central Bank and IMF – a year to persuade the government to adopt the scheme. It still faces strong resistance.

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The strikers complain that administrators were ordered to move without first being evaluated. The job cuts, they claim, reflect the same system of political patronage formerly used to make civil-service appointments.

All approaches to resolving the conflict have so far failed.

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25 MARKS, 45 MINUTES

1. Define:
 - i. Unions
 - ii. Collective bargaining

[4 marks]
2. Explain **two** common sources of conflict in the workforce

[6 marks]
3. Explain **two** reasons for resistance to change in the workforce

[6 marks]
4. Discuss human resource strategies for reducing the impact of change in the workplace

[9 marks]