

collective bargaining

Issue 6/2016 June

This newsletter presents up-to-date information on collective bargaining developments across Europe since February 2008. It aims to facilitate information exchange between trade unions and to support the work of the ETUC's collective bargaining committee.



AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LABOUR STUDIES
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European sources

European deal on minimum standards for trainees in electricity sector

June 27, 2016

Employers and trade unions signed a landmark agreement to provide minimum standards for trainees in the European electricity sector. According to the European Federation of Public Service Unions, one of the European trade union organisations that negotiated the agreement, the deal makes it clear that trainees aren't a source of cheap labour. The Quality Framework for Traineeships in the European Electricity Sector stipulates that trainees will benefit from collective agreements already in place. It recognises the key role of trade unions in ensuring quality traineeships and strengthens protection for young people starting out in the sector. European trade union IndustriAll added that the deal brings the Sector Social Dialogue Committee to another level of maturity. The unions are determined to promote good working conditions and opportunities for young people in Europe to start a career in the sector.

English: [http://www.epsu.org/article/electricity-sector-trade-unions-and-employers-sign ...](http://www.epsu.org/article/electricity-sector-trade-unions-and-employers-sign-...)

The agreement: [http://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files ...](http://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files-...)

Fifth European Jobs Monitor

June 20, 2016

The fifth annual European Jobs Monitor report looks at employment shifts at Member State and aggregate EU level (period 2100-2015). A 'jobs-based' approach is used to describe employment shifts quantitatively (how many jobs were created or destroyed) and qualitatively (what kinds of jobs). It also introduces a new set of indicators on the task content, methods and tools used at work. These indicators are used to analyse, in greater detail, the distribution of tasks across Europe, their association with other attributes of jobs such as wages, education and job quality. Derived from international databases on work and occupations, the indicators give a detailed account of what Europeans do at work and how they do it. They provide valuable new insights on the structural differences and recent evolution of European labour markets, as well as a better understanding of labour input in the production process and the changing nature of skills required.

English: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication-...)

OECD updates labour costs overview

June 16, 2016

The OECD published an updated version of its overview of unit labour costs (ULC). ULC growth in the OECD area slowed to 0.5% in the first quarter of 2016 (compared with 0.6% in the previous quarter). In the UK, ULC growth slowed (to 0.2%, compared with 0.4% in the previous quarter) as labour productivity growth picked up marginally to 0.2%. In the Euro area, ULC growth also slowed (to 0.1%, compared with 0.3% in the previous quarter), with labour productivity growth picking up slightly (to 0.2%). ULCs were flat in Germany and increased only marginally in France (0.1%). They fell in Italy (minus 0.1%) and Spain (minus 0.6%). However, ULCs accelerated strongly in Greece (up 2.1%, as productivity fell for the 4th straight quarter and compensation costs rose by 1.7%) and Portugal (up 1.6%, with marginal productivity growth).

English: [http://www.oecd.org/std/labour-stats ...](http://www.oecd.org/std/labour-stats-...)

Airport United starts with action on several European airports

June 6, 2016

A workers' group of the global transport trade union ITF has launched a new organisation, Airports United, which kicked off its struggle for economic justice, safety and security with actions in 33 airports. The launch was backed by the release of ITF research that showed that, although the global airline industry is expected to make record profits of USD36.3 billion this year, airlines have created a cost cutting culture that is affecting airport workers, safety and services. According to the research, workers have faced a steady decline in wages. A new normal has emerged in which airlines have subcontracted airport work to new subsidiaries or agencies with markedly inferior terms and conditions.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/june/airport-workers-group ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/june/airport-workers-group-...)

The report: [http://admin.itfglobal.org/media/1373351/record-profits-for-airlines ...](http://admin.itfglobal.org/media/1373351/record-profits-for-airlines-...)

The legal extension of collective agreements

June 3, 2016

This policy brief briefly reviews the different forms, the spread and current practice of collective bargaining extension mechanisms across Europe. The author also discusses the relationship between extension mechanisms, collective bargaining coverage and union density, and formulates political recommendations of how to ensure the future of multi-employer bargaining through extension procedures.

English: <http://www.etui.org/Publications2/Policy-Briefs ...>

Trends in collective bargaining

June 1, 2016

The Eurofound Annual Report 2015 includes several sections on collective bargaining and wage setting. In the social dialogue section, the report signals that one of its core functions – collective bargaining – has been fragmenting at Member State level. Eurofound identifies two paths along which collective bargaining is evolving. Along one path, the role of collective bargaining is narrowing to a mechanism for setting wages within a corridor determined by firm performance, competitiveness and productivity. The other is a wider path where the role of collective bargaining encompasses social integration, equality and fairness, and influences employment and working conditions as well its subsidiary role in regard to income and wealth distribution in society more broadly. The process of decentralisation has been reinforced by increasing freedom of employers to deviate from the provisions of a collective agreement. Bargaining coordination has weakened since 2008, despite a potentially increasing need for coordination due to decentralisation. A number of countries with traditionally strong coordination have experienced a weakening of coordination in certain sectors.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files ...>

Inequality survey

June 1, 2016

The Bertelsmann Foundation published a survey on perceptions of inequality. Over the past few decades, inequality has increased in various countries. Standard theory suggests that growing inequality as measured by a widening gap between the average and the median income should raise support for redistribution policies because politicians react to the preferences of the median voter. However, most available data do not support the hypothesised relationship between inequality and redistribution. In the survey, five EU-countries (France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, the UK) are compared with Brazil, the US and Russia on existing inequalities, on economic variables and, as background for redistribution, on public social expenditures. The study includes interesting figures and tables, for instance on perceived and ideal income.

English: <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files ...>

Austria

One third of the workforce has a non-standard contract

June 28, 2016

Statistics Austria reports that in 2015, 1.21 million or 33.5% of the employees worked in non-standard employment – either in part-time, in marginal part-time, with limited or free service contracts or in temporary employment. At the same time, the number of employees (3.61 million) increased by 43 000 compared to 2014. This increase was mainly due to a rise of part-time work, but the number of persons in standard employment increased as well (+13 000). 84.0% of all male but only 47.9% of all female employees worked in standard employment. Thus, for women non-standard employment is almost as frequent as standard employment.

English: http://www.statistik.at/web_en/press ...

German (with statistics): http://www.statistik.at/web_de/presse ...

We're not only in it for the money

June 17, 2016

Researchers who measured the feeling of happiness at work concluded that money alone does not make a happy worker. A good work atmosphere, good relationships between colleagues, and interesting work tasks, are more important for many employees. Respondents to their survey (from Austria, Germany and Switzerland) expressed that being given freedom to do their work and achieving targets and feeling

confidence is more important than control from above. Self-determination and individualism are seen as important tools for motivation and productivity.

English: <http://www.thelocal.at/20160617/western-austria-has-the-happiest-employees>

German: <http://news.kununu.com/warum-geld-nicht-alles-glueck-arbeitnehmer/>

Postal negotiations end successfully

June 17, 2016

The trade union for postal and parcel delivery GPF concluded an agreement with the national post. The pay deal includes an increase as of 1 July 2016 of 1.4% for workers that were already covered by the existing 2009 collective agreement. Newcomers under the agreement will receive a pay increase of 1.5%. Workers that were already engaged on 1 January 2016 will also receive a lump-sum payment of 200 euro. The existing special child assistance pay (15 euro monthly) was prolonged.

German: <http://www.gpf.at/news/post-einigung-bei-gehaltsverhandlungen>

Metal workers conclude working time agreement

June 15, 2016

The issue of developing a more flexible working time scheme (especially the extension of the reference period for paying overtime) has been on the bargaining agenda since the 2009 collective bargaining round. The bargaining partners have agreed on a flexible model that will be implemented from 1 July 2016. In order to use the model an underlying company agreement is necessary. The model is based on an average working time of 38.5 hour per week over a longer period of calculation. The absolute maximum working day of 9 hours and the maximum working week of 45 hours stay upright.

German: [http://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06_6.1.a/1342568648852/presse ...](http://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06_6.1.a/1342568648852/presse...)

Agreement concluded for spa and healing centres

June 3, 2016

Trade unions vida and GPA-djp concluded a collective agreement for the spa and healing centres with private employers in the care sector (WKÖ). It includes a 1.3% pay increase from 1 July 2016, with a backdated lump sum of 220 euro to cover the period October 2015 to June 2016. The agreement runs until 31 December 2017 and includes a further pay increase on 1 January 2017 based on the average inflation rate between October 2015 and November 2016.

English: [http://www.epsu.org/epsucob/2016-june-epsucobnews-07/pay-deal-spa-and ...](http://www.epsu.org/epsucob/2016-june-epsucobnews-07/pay-deal-spa-and...)

German: [http://www.vida.at/cms ...](http://www.vida.at/cms...)

Belgium

Gender pay gap decreases, but is still substantial

June 28, 2016

The gender pay gap report 2016, produced by the Institute for equality between women and men and the Federal Department for employment, labour and social dialogue, reveals that in 2013 a woman earned on average 8% less (gross hourly wage) than a man. Annually, taking into account part-time work, the pay gap mounted up to 21%. The data show an improvement of 1 percent point compared to the preceding report. Thus, only a slow evolution in the improvement of women wages takes place.

French: [http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/actualite/lecart_salarial_diminue_mais ...](http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/actualite/lecart_salarial_diminue_mais...)

Dutch: [http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/pb_loonkloofrapport ...](http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/pb_loonkloofrapport...)

One-day general strike

June 24, 2016

A one-day strike caused disruption to public transport, municipal public services and crèches. Some private sector companies have also been hit by the strike action as have the ports. Trade unions protest against what they call the antisocial measures of the government, in particular plans for a labour reform. The

confederation of socialist trade unions proclaimed on the eve of the strike an increase of the minimum hourly wage to 14 euro.

English: [http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/Economy ...](http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/Economy...)

[http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5843/hourly-minimum-wage ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5843/hourly-minimum-wage...)

[http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5857/general-strike-a-clear-message ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5857/general-strike-a-clear-message...)

Railway workers come to an agreement

June 16, 2016

After a long period of disputes and industrial action the railway workers' unions and the national rail company have come to an agreement. They reached an accord on compensation days and measures to increase productivity. The drive to increase productivity of the company triggered industrial action in recent months as the management pressed for a reduction in the number of holidays and compensation days enjoyed by rail staff. In the deal the rail unions have agreed to drop the 15 November holiday. From 2017 on, one compensation day will be lost after 18 days of illness. Rail staff will then no longer enjoy 2 November as a holiday either. No further measures intended at increasing productivity are planned before 2020.

English: [http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News ...](http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News...)

Prison workers ended strike

June 16, 2016

Prison agents on strike at the Arlon prison met at a general assembly. They decided to resume work and to cease the strike underway for 50 days at Arlon prison and other establishments of the South of the country. The return to work was decided with a lot of frustration; workers had to deal with increasing financial problems and a lack of willingness from the side of the authorities to talk with union representatives. During the dispute, the work of the prison workers was partly taken over by the police and the military.

English: [http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5777/work-shall-resume ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/employment/5777/work-shall-resume...)

Bulgaria

Essential services and the right to strike

June 27, 2016

In a country update on the latest developments in working life in the first quarter of 2016 it is reported that medical doctors and their co-workers, and policemen and prison guards organised national protests against proposed reforms in their sector, though they are not permitted to strike. General practitioners, medical employees and doctors from private and state-owned hospitals organised protests against reforms proposed by the Ministry of Health. Their protest was supported by the Bulgarian Medical Association. The Constitutional Court has also rejected the Ministry's reforms.

English: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/working-conditions ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/working-conditions...)

Labour cost data published

June 21, 2016

The national statistical office NSI announced that the total hourly labour cost rose by 7.7% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2016. In March, the NSI reported a 5.8% year-on-year increase in labour cost for the fourth quarter of 2015. In January-March 2016, the total hourly labour cost grew by 8.6% in industry, 7.0% in services and 8.4% in construction. In the structure of labour costs, the wages and salaries costs per hour worked grew by 7.6% in comparison with the first quarter of 2015, while non-wage costs (the actual and imputed social insurance contribution paid by employers plus taxes regarded as labour costs) rose by 7.8%.

English: [http://www.novinite.com/articles/175042/Hourly+Labour+Costs ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles/175042/Hourly+Labour+Costs...)

Croatia

Standard of living among lowest in the EU

June 16, 2016

Estimates on consumption and GDP per capita published by the EU's statistical office Eurostat reveal that the standard of living in Croatia in 2014 was among the lowest in the European Union, along with the standard of living in Romania and Bulgaria. Actual Individual Consumption (AIC) is a measure of the material welfare of households. AIC per capita expressed in Purchasing Power Standards in Croatia in 2014 was as much as 41% below the EU average, according to preliminary estimates. In 2013, it was 39% below the average. The GDP per capita last year was also 41% below the EU average and in 2013 it was 39% below the average.

English: <http://arhiva.dalje.com/en-economy/standard-of-living-in-croatia ...>

Payment of June wages under pressure

June 16, 2016

The state budget might receive a serious hit - around 180 thousand public servants, employees in education, health, culture and social workers, are currently expecting news of a regress which, according to the basic collective agreement for public services, must be paid by the end of June. The amount of regress is set at 1,250 Kuna, meaning the state needs to come up with 225 million Kuna (30 million euro). Negotiations with the trade unions, so far have not led to a solution. Government officials said that there is no money for additional material rights of budget beneficiaries.

English: <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/item/12407-government-must-urgently-find ...>

Cyprus

Unions demand for change of working time

June 24, 2016

The Labour Office in the north of the country has joined forces with the Health Office in a bid to bring about changes to working hours during the heat wave currently gripping the island. A trade union spokesperson stated that workers should not be working during the hours of 12pm to 4pm. It should be against the law for employees to be put to work outdoors during those hours due to not only the risks from the heat but also from the possible high levels of humidity. Despite temperatures reaching over 40° C, workers still have to work outdoors on construction sites or manual labour jobs.

English: <http://in-cyprus.com/labour-unions-calls-heat-wave-changes/>

Czech Republic

Early retirement for miners

June 24, 2016

The president of the republic has signed a bill introducing earlier retirement of miners into law, along with several other government-sponsored bills. The earlier age at retirement concerns miners who have worked 3300 shifts in an underground coal mine or 2200 shifts in a uranium mine. At present, men retire at about 63 years, while the age limit is postponed by two months each year. The miners will retire seven years sooner than the rest.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2016/06/24/zeman-signs-earlier-retirement-miners-law>

Government commits to minimum six percent pay rise for teachers

June 22, 2016

With ongoing negotiations about the necessary pay increase for teachers (see our earlier Newsletters), the government has publicly stated a commitment to a pay rise in 2017 of at least six percent (even as high as eight percent depending on personal evaluation). The prime minister stated that teachers and education were a priority for the government. Teachers' unions have been pushing for an increase of at least 10%.

English: <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/news/government-commits-to-minimum-six-percent ...>

Lowering of wage requirements for foreign labour recruitment

June 16, 2016

The proposal to lower the minimum wage requirements that employers have to pay new recruits from Ukraine is gaining momentum as the pilot project has not been much of a success. The result is so far 69 recruits, following applications from 46 companies. The government clearly expected more success when it set the annual quota of recruits at 500. The recruitment programme has been eyed with a lot of suspicion by the trades unions. They argue that a basic problem in the current skills shortage is the fact that local employers are not willing to pay the rates for the job or train workers up so that they can fill the vacancies.

English: <http://radio.cz/en/section/business/ukrainian-recruitment-programme-comes-up-short>

Denmark

Statistical yearbook 2016

June 16, 2016

Statistics Denmark published its Statistical Yearbook 2016. The yearbook contains an almost endless number of figures and presents a detailed insight into the welfare society throughout the recent decades. Next to general chapters on living conditions and housing, education and knowledge, prices, consumption, national accounts et cetera, the book has one chapter on labour, income and wealth. In this chapter, information is given on personal income by socio-economic status and the income situation of the population is compared with other European countries.

English: [http://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/Publikationer ...](http://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/Publikationer...)

Chapter on labour and income: [http://www.dst.dk/Site/Dst/Udgivelser ...](http://www.dst.dk/Site/Dst/Udgivelser...)

Newsletter explains tripartite agreement on integration of refugees

June 15, 2016

The quarterly Newsletter of the trade union confederation LO reports on the latest developments in the labour market. In the June 2016 issue LO explains the agreement with government and employers that will help refugees with their labour market integration (see also our earlier Newsletters). The cornerstone of the agreement is the integrative vocational training program (IGU) for refugees that includes a 6 months' in-company training and language courses. The pay is in line with the collective agreements and the employer receives a bonus for taking on trainees.

English: [http://www.lo.dk/~media/LO/English/DLN/DanishLabourNews ...](http://www.lo.dk/~media/LO/English/DLN/DanishLabourNews...)

Serious worries about safety at wind park

June 9, 2016

A case of employees who developed occupational diseases in the wind turbine industry has attracted great attention in the media because problems with hazardous chemicals in the workplace were considered a thing of the past - something that companies had long since gotten under control. Radio Denmark uncovered one of the biggest scandals involving exposure to dangerous chemicals at work in recent time. Two major wind turbine manufacturers, Siemens Wind Power and Vestas, have taken health and safety at work so lightly that at least 150 employees have become seriously ill from workplace exposure to epoxy and isocyanates. This case proves that certain companies have not been up to the job and have failed to live up to their responsibility to ensure safe and healthy workplaces where going to work doesn't make you sick.

English: <http://www.lo.dk/English%20ersion/News/siemens.aspx>

Estonia

Social dialogue in education – wage development

June 8, 2016

In the framework of a joint project on social dialogue capacity building, the European social partners in education gathered around the table Estonian education social partners. Trade union EEPU discussed the need to develop and strengthen social dialogue with representatives from the ministry of education and research, the Association of municipalities, the vocational education department and the adult education

department. Among the discussed items were teachers working conditions, teachers' wages, the lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession, municipalities' governance issues, as well as the low rate of unionisation of teachers. Recent data indicate that in the first four months of 2016 the average monthly salary of teachers of municipal schools was 1,135 euros, which marks a year-on-year rise of 6.3 per cent. The strategic goal is to raise the average pay of teachers by 2019 to a level equalling 120 per cent of the national average wage. The state's support to local governments to top up the teacher payroll increased this year by 13.2 million euros or 7.3 per cent, to 196 million euros. The national minimum salary for teachers, i.e. the smallest amount schools can pay a full-time teacher per month in 2015, is 958 euro.

English: [https://www.csee-etuue.org/en/news/archive/1509-estonia ...](https://www.csee-etuue.org/en/news/archive/1509-estonia...)
http://www.baltictimes.com/estonia__teacher_salary_averages_1_135_euros/

Growing labour costs and the search for higher added value

June 8, 2016

The Bank of Estonia stated that the actual movement of workers to jobs with higher productivity and higher wages will make the structure of the economy more based on value added and will increase the incomes of residents. The increase in labour costs and reduced profitability are affecting first and foremost the branches of the economy with a lower added value, and should prompt businesses to invest in undertakings offering higher added value. The bankers said that collective agreements play only a small role beyond setting minimum wages and employers can decide directly about their wage costs.

English: [https://www.eestipank.ee/en/press/risk-growth-slowing ...](https://www.eestipank.ee/en/press/risk-growth-slowing...)

Finland

Negotiations at Wärtsilä lead to less dismissals

June 15, 2016

Wärtsilä previously announced that it would be laying off 270 people in Finland as part of 550 jobs to be shed worldwide. As a result of co-determination talks, the power and marine systems company says the actual number of employees to lose their jobs in Finland is smaller than previously anticipated. The majority of the 183 employees will lose their jobs work at the company's Vaasa location.

English: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/wartsila_to_cut_183_jobs_in_finland ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/wartsila_to_cut_183_jobs_in_finland...)

Competitiveness pact signed

June 15, 2016

The national labour market pact or so-called Competitiveness Pact was signed on the evening of 14 June. Most trade unions endorsed the Pact and it now covers 86.5 percent of the wage and salary earners. It has been the main issue in social politics for more than a year. The government was determined to cut costs for employers and forced trade unions to accept a deal that makes everyone work 24 hours more a year for the existing pay rates. There will be no pay rises for one year. The Pact includes further weakening of established working arrangements and benefits, like slicing 30% off the holiday bonus for workers in the public sector.

English: [http://www.jhl.fi/portal/en ...](http://www.jhl.fi/portal/en...)

Post wants negotiations on job cuts

June 8, 2016

National mail service company Posti has announced a new round of employer-employee negotiations about slashing up to 370 jobs. The company says it plans to discontinue early morning newspaper delivery services in yet-to-be-specified parts of the country. The company said it will offer laid-off personnel access to a programme which aims to help them find new jobs, get retrained or become entrepreneurs.

English: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/posti_up_to_370_newspaper_delivery_jobs_to_be_cut ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/posti_up_to_370_newspaper_delivery_jobs_to_be_cut...)

France

Protest over labour reform continues

June 29, 2016

Thousands of protesters marched in Paris as the Senate approved a hotly debated government bill reforming labour laws. The government allowed the protest march after negotiating an alternative route for the demonstration, which was initially banned. The government wants the reforms to make it easier to lay off employees, allow temporary extensions of the work week and give company deals priority over industry-wide deals. Some unions argue it would weaken workers' rights. During two weeks of debate, the Senate, led by a conservative majority, substantially changed the bill to make it more pro-business. Yet, the labour reforms must be debated again in July at the lower house of parliament, the National Assembly, led by a socialist majority. Amendments that have been proposed by the government so far have not satisfied the strongest opponents, the trade unions CGT and FO.

English: [http://www.france24.com/en/20160628-thousands-march-paris ...](http://www.france24.com/en/20160628-thousands-march-paris...)

French: [http://www.europe1.fr/societe/loi-travail-en-progres-mais-pas-suffisant ...](http://www.europe1.fr/societe/loi-travail-en-progres-mais-pas-suffisant...)

Pilots call off strike

June 23, 2016

Air France pilots had announced a work stoppage in a dispute over wages. That threat was backed on 2 June by several unions. The strike notice warned of a 'two to four day walk-out' and was motivated by pay and the pilots defending their jobs as competition increases from other budget subsidiaries like Hop! and Transavia. They called off the strike planned for the weekend, after the incoming CEO of Air France-KLM proposed freezing new pay rules opposed by the pilots in exchange for a four-month truce. In return, the three unions (SNPL, Spaf and Alter) dropped their June 24-27 strike call.

English: <http://www.thelocal.fr/20160622/air-france-pilots-call-off-strike>

Rail talks enter new stage

June 9, 2016

After 19 hours of tense negotiations there was hope that the rail strikes would be called off. SNCF workers have been striking partly in opposition to the labour reforms but also and chiefly in a bid to improve their own working conditions. Following the lengthy negotiations an agreement was drawn up on the thorny issue of the working week, which SNCF hopes will be signed by strikers as soon as possible.

English: [http://www.thelocal.fr/20160607/hopes-raised-that-french-rail-strikes ...](http://www.thelocal.fr/20160607/hopes-raised-that-french-rail-strikes...)

Germany

Lufthansa and cabin crew union come to a deal

June 30, 2016

Lufthansa and the cabin crew union UFO have reached a deal in a long-running dispute over pay, conditions and pensions, in a boost for the carrier which is also negotiating with pilots. The deal was achieved thanks to a mediator, who will formally announce the terms in July once a few final details have been agreed, the two sides said. Until then, both sides said they had agreed to keep the terms confidential.

English: <http://news.airwise.com/story/lufthansa-cabin-crew-union-agree-deal>

Statutory minimum wage also for on-call work

June 29, 2016

The labour court (*Bundesarbeitsgericht*) has formulated that the statutory minimum hourly wage has to be applied for the hours that workers are on-call. Furthermore, the court defined what has to be understood as on-call time. The court argued that the Bill on the statutory wage has no differentiation between regular work and on-call hours. On-call hours count if the employee has to wait and stay at a certain place and has to be available to start working at any minute.

German: [http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/soziales/mindestlohn-gilt-auch-fuer ...](http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/soziales/mindestlohn-gilt-auch-fuer...)

Increase of minimum wage agreed

June 28, 2016

The trade unions and the employers' organisations agreed on the increase of the statutory minimum wage. The proposal is to lift the gross hourly minimum wage up to 8.84 euro. The agreement will lead to the first adaptation, after the introduction of the legal minimum wage that was introduced in January 2015. At the introduction of the statutory minimum wage the government had commissioned the task to review and update the level of the paid wage to a paritarian committee, with representatives of the central employers and trade union organisations. The calculations method is based on the development of the wage development in collective bargaining. The average wage increase in around 500 agreements in one and a half year was calculated at 3.2%. In a preparatory report, it was revealed that the introduction of the legal wage had had no negative consequences on employment. One remarkable effect is that the total size of so-called mini-jobs reduced, with mini-jobs being modified in more traditional contracts.

English: [http://www.dw.com/en/german-minimum-wage-set-to-rise-in-2017 ...](http://www.dw.com/en/german-minimum-wage-set-to-rise-in-2017-...)

German: <http://www.dgb.de/presse/++co++3d1eae2e-3d25-11e6-8be9-525400e5a74a>

Report of the Minimum Wage Committee (German): <http://www.mindestlohn-kommission.de ...>

Chemical workers agree on new terms and conditions

June 23, 2016

After a period of intensive negotiations, trade union IG BCE, representing about 650,000 workers in the mining, chemical, and energy industries reached an agreement for a pay deal for workers in the chemical industry with the employers' association BAVC. The agreement will run for two years. It includes a pay increase of 3.0% in the first step and 2.3% in a second phase; the timing of the increase is related to a regional and company clause. The agreement also introduces a 'Starts' program for apprentices and young migrants that enter the labour market.

English: http://www.chemweek.com/business/environment/corporate_social_responsibility ...

German: <https://www.igbce.de/tarife/chemie-tarifrunde/chemie-tarifrunde-2016-abschluss ...>

A blog that was used during the campaign (in German): <https://chemie2016.tumblr.com/>

Greece

Aviation workers suspend strike

June 23, 2016

Civil aviation workers suspended a five-day strike planned for 20-25 June to protest against the development of the country's regional airports after receiving assurances from the government their jobs were not at risk. Civil aviation workers trade union OSYPA had called the strike after the governmental privatisation agency had published an invitation to hire an adviser to work out whether some 23 regional airports could be further developed. The union feared that such a move would result in job losses or hurt workers' labour rights. After a series of meetings, OSYPA said the government and senior officials had shown 'sensitivity' over the issues that worried workers and were willing to discuss the airports' future with unions.

English: <http://www.ekathimerini.com/209722/article/ekathimerini/news/greek-civil-aviation ...>

Civil servants to join strike by teachers and hospital staff

June 6, 2016

Public sector trade union ADEDY called on civil servants to walk off the job on 8 June in solidarity with hospital workers and public school teachers. The stoppage by civil service employees will allow workers to take part in a rally by the federation of public hospital workers, POEDIN, outside the Health Ministry and a march by teachers to the Parliament. In a statement, the union said that the public education and healthcare systems are being trampled on and are on the brink 'of total collapse due to the coalition government's obsession with its policies' that act against the interests of the people.

English: <http://www.ekathimerini.com/209226/article/ekathimerini/news/civil-servants ...>

Hungary

Municipal workers strike

June 22, 2016

Nearly 5,000 municipal employees across the country refused to work on 22 June, demanding higher wages. The two-hour strike was organized by the trade union of Civil Servants and Public Employees (MKKSZ). According to the trade union, 4,800 civil servants joined the strike in more than 100 local government offices. In some smaller cities more than half of the civil servants refused to work. The municipal employees have not received a raise in eight years. While civil servants working at the newly created district government offices are due to receive a 30 percent pay rise in July, municipal government employees have been left out.

English: [http://budapestbeacon.com/civil-society/municipal-employees-hold-two-hour-strike ...](http://budapestbeacon.com/civil-society/municipal-employees-hold-two-hour-strike...)

Promises to double wages of health care workers until 2019

June 13, 2016

Close to 100 000 employees in the state-owned health care sector will receive major pay rises under an agreement signed by the government, the trade unions and the chambers representing medical professions. Gross basic wages of specialist doctors and hospital-based specialist pharmacists will increase by HUF 107 000 (342 euro) from September 2016 and a further HUF 100 000 (320 euro) from 1 November 2017. Resident doctors' basic wage will increase by HUF 50 000 (160 euro) from November. As for health care workers, basic wages will increase by an average of 26.5 percent this year, 12 percent from November 2017 and a further 8 percent in November 2018 and November 2019.

English: [http://hungarytoday.hu/news/government-health-care-workers-wages-double-2019 ...](http://hungarytoday.hu/news/government-health-care-workers-wages-double-2019...)

Iceland

Air traffic control action confronted with legal ban

June 26, 2016

The ongoing dispute between air traffic controllers and the airport management has entered a new stage as the parliament passed a bill forcing a resolution to the ongoing pay dispute. On several occasions, an inability to sufficiently man air traffic control had led to night-time airport closures and significant travel disruption for thousands of passengers. The law included an immediate halt will to the ongoing work-to-rule strike. If no agreement can be reached, the matter will be sent to a court of arbitration for a final resolution.

English: [http://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/nature_and_travel/2016/06/20/more_iceland ...](http://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/nature_and_travel/2016/06/20/more_iceland...)

Ireland

Union critical about repeal of law cutting pay

June 24, 2016

One of the largest public sector unions has warned that the complete repeal of the legislation which cut the pay and pensions of State employees during the recession would see high earners gain substantially more than their lower-paid colleagues. In a blog post to the union membership, Impact's head of communication said a complete reversal of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act (Fempfi) would give a worker on €30,000 a total gain of less than €450 a year, while someone earning €125,000 would stand to gain almost €20,000. The union calls this a regressive outcome and believes that deals have to be negotiated, which deliver continuing improved living standards for those on low and middle incomes, with a fair and balanced unwinding of Fempfi for all over time. Because, as the recovery strengthens the country needs to return to normal industrial relations where pay is set by agreement, not legislation.

English: [http://www.irisheaminer.com/ireland/union-warns-against-repeal-of-law ...](http://www.irisheaminer.com/ireland/union-warns-against-repeal-of-law...)

Childminding dispute referred to Workplace Relations Commission

June 24, 2016

Staff at Childminding Ireland are on an indefinite strike since the beginning of June 2016 after five workers were served redundancy notices. Trade union IMPACT has agreed to attend a Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) mediation meeting on the dispute. Neither the union, nor its members in Childminding Ireland, received any contact from the agency's management since their strike got underway on 7 June. The company has indicated that future staff will be required to have a childcare qualification. Workers will continue the action until management reverses its decision, and enters talks over a proposed restructuring.

English: [http://www.irisht Examiner.com/breakingnews/ireland/childminding-ireland-staff ...](http://www.irisht Examiner.com/breakingnews/ireland/childminding-ireland-staff...)

Substantial increase of minimum wage discussed

June 12, 2016

A pay rise of 25% could be on the way for around 124,000 workers on the minimum wage. Trade unions have argued strongly at government level that the current minimum wage needs to change to a 'living wage', with a hefty hike in the rate of pay. There are suggestions that the Low Pay Commission could recommend a pay increase of 25% for minimum wage workers when it reports to government in July 2016. If agreed, this would bring the national minimum wage of €9.15 to €11.50 per hour, by the end of 2017. Wage hikes recommended by the Low Pay Commission, if agreed, are likely to take effect from this year's budget. But the latest proposal has sparked outrage from employers who believe there is no justification with zero rate inflation. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) has argued strongly for the 25% increase to happen by the end of 2017. The union is not alone in calling for a minimum wage increase; it has called in support from over 130 TDs, Senators and MEPs, and 171 councillors. A proposal to ensure that workers would earn at least €11.75 per hour is already in existence, but it would not be introduced until Budget 2018.

English: [http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/25-pay-rise-could-way ...](http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/25-pay-rise-could-way...)

Failure to uphold international labour rights

June 2, 2016

The government has been called on to explain its failure to properly uphold the rights of all workers to collectively bargain with their employer - specifically freelance workers - before a hearing of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva. The ILO hearing follows a formal complaint in 2011 from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions that Ireland had repeatedly failed to honour and give effect to ILO Conventions, on the right of freelance workers to bargain collectively with their employer. As a member state and a signatory to ILO Conventions the government will be required to attend the hearing and account for this failure. The effective ban on freelance workers engaging in collective bargaining follows a ruling of the Competition Authority in 2004, which categorised individual freelance workers as 'business undertakings'.

English: [http://www.newstalk.com/ILO-labour-laws-ICTU-Geneva-International-Labour ...](http://www.newstalk.com/ILO-labour-laws-ICTU-Geneva-International-Labour...)

Earnings snapshot

June 2, 2016

The trade unions confederation ICTU published the third issue of its Labour Market Notes, which provides regular updates on key labour market developments. In this issue an overview of the average earnings in the first quarter of 2016 (weekly 708 euro, an increase compared to 2015 with 1.1%), the earnings across sectors (largest increase in financial, insurance and real estate services with 6.9% - largest decrease in public administration with 3.8%). The lowest paid sector is accommodation and food services.

English: http://www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/lmn_3_june_2016.pdf

Italy

Data on contractual wages and employment

June 24, 2016

The index of wages according to collective labour agreements measures the evolution of wages and salaries (per employee or per hour) determined by contractual provisions set by collective agreements; the indices are calculated with reference to the fixed employment structure of the base period (December 2010). At the end of May 2016 the coverage rate (share of national collective agreements in force for the wage setting aspects) was 36.0 per cent in terms of employees and 34.8 per cent in terms of the total amount of wages. The labour market results of the 1st quarter indicate that on the labour supply side, total employment slightly grew to the previous quarter, after a light decrease in the fourth quarter of 2015, but with highly differentiated dynamics among the types of employment. The increase in permanent employees was balanced by the decrease in temporary employment and by the stability of the self-employed.

English: [http://www.istat.it/en/files/2016/06/EN_contractual_wages_salaries ...](http://www.istat.it/en/files/2016/06/EN_contractual_wages_salaries...)
[http://www.istat.it/en/files/2016/06/EN_labour_market ...](http://www.istat.it/en/files/2016/06/EN_labour_market...)

Air traffic controllers strike

June 17, 2016

Air traffic controllers will down tools for a national strike that will see up to 500 flights cancelled nationwide. The industrial action has been organized by the Union of Flight Assistance and Control (Unica) and the League of Italian Air Traffic Controllers (Lica). The workers are striking over issues surrounding pensions and contractual rights.

English: [http://www.thelocal.it/20160617/air-traffic-controllers-strike-puts-500-flights ...](http://www.thelocal.it/20160617/air-traffic-controllers-strike-puts-500-flights-...)

Garbage collectors' negotiations broken

June 15, 2016

After a first strike on 30 May, the trade unions and the employers in the waste collection sector went back to the negotiations table. However, talks on a new contract broke down overnight. Workers have decided to go for a new strike. Rubbish will be left in the street. The stoppage will affect public and private companies, union officials said.

English: [http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2016/06/15/rubbish-lies-in-streets-amid-strike ...](http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2016/06/15/rubbish-lies-in-streets-amid-strike-...)
[http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2016/05/30/trash-strike-causes-nationwide-disruption ...](http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2016/05/30/trash-strike-causes-nationwide-disruption-...)

Latvia

Unemployment might grow by year end

June 27, 2016

The State Employment Agency estimates that unemployment may rise again towards the end of the year, and will be approximately 8 percent then. Although the number of unemployed people is dropping, the unemployment level is near to the respective period last year, showing that improvement of the labour market situation has slowed. Central Statistical Bureau data indicates that the number of employed people has risen since the beginning of 2016. The same positive trends can be seen in the data of the State Employment Agency, suggesting a slow decline in unemployment, mainly due to seasonal jobs.

English: [http://www.baltictimes.com/unemployment_might_grow_by_year_end ...](http://www.baltictimes.com/unemployment_might_grow_by_year_end-...)

Envelope wages make up 36.3% of all wages in construction

June 9, 2016

A study on the shadow economy in construction conducted by the Latvian Partnership of Building Contractors, Business against Shadow Economy (BASE) NGO, and the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga (SSE Riga) revealed that unreported pay or the so-called envelope wages make up 36.3% of all wages paid in the construction sector, which is significantly higher than the country's average figure of 17.9%. Also other elements of the shadow economy are much higher represented in the construction sector than on average. The proportion of unreported income in construction is 31.6% compared to 19.9% in the total economy, and unreported employment reaches 23.5% against 9.6% on average.

English: [http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics ...](http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics-...)

Liechtenstein

Collective agreement for agency sector generally binding

June 7, 2016

The social partners had asked for the legal extension of the collective agreement in the agency sector. The government has decided to make the agreement generally binding, starting from 1 April 2016 until 31 March 2018. The compliance is monitored through a central paritarian committee that has several competences, for instance on the interpretation of disputes and the sanctioning in case of breaches.

German: [http://www.zpk.li/Portals/0/gav/gav/2016/Personaler-GAV ...](http://www.zpk.li/Portals/0/gav/gav/2016/Personaler-GAV-...)

Lithuania

Detailed labour market figures presented

June 22, 2016

Statistics Lithuania presented a statistical publication *Lithuania in Figures 2016*. The bilingual (Lithuanian and English) publication presents information on the economic and social development. Statistical information about the population, education, culture, health care, labour, industry, agriculture, construction, trade, transport, national accounts, etc. is presented in tables, graphs and diagrams. The data show that the average net monthly wage increased in the period 2005-2015 from 266 euro to 554 euro.

English: [http://osp.stat.gov.lt/services-portlet/pub-edition ...](http://osp.stat.gov.lt/services-portlet/pub-edition...)

Luxembourg

Collective agreement at Delphi Automotive

June 30, 2016

Trade union OGBI and the management of Delphi Luxembourg have signed an agreement for the 600 workers of the group. The agreement will run from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2018. Agreed is a pay increase of 1.25% in the year 2016 and an additional 0.5% in the following two years. The minimum weekly gross wage is fixed at 350 euro. A joint committee will work out the details of an agreed system of variable wage components.

French: <http://www.ogbl.lu/blog/renouvellement-de-la-convention-collective-24/>

EU employees see erosion of working conditions

June 20, 2016

It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit highly qualified staff to work in the European Institutions in Luxembourg because salaries are no longer competitive, a trade union has complained. Currently, 12,000 people are employed within these European Institutions, making it the second biggest employer in the country. But, according to Union Syndicale Luxembourg, as rising housing and living costs eat into the purchasing power of staff, certain grades of 'employees of the EU no longer want to work in Luxembourg and those who do will leave at the first opportunity'. The union also criticised the growing practice of recruiting highly qualified temporary staff on salaries below the minimum wage for a qualified manual worker.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/business/european-institutions-civil-servants-union ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/business/european-institutions-civil-servants-union...)

Malta

Uncertainty over hospital deal

June 16, 2016

Three trade unions are warning that unless they are fully briefed about the takeover by private investor Vitalis Global Healthcare Group of three State hospitals they will refuse to endorse the deal. Union officials remarked that their members' were being fed the same information while leaving serious concerns, such as job fears, unaddressed. A spokesperson of the health ministry said the transition plan and the investors' role would be announced soon while employees and unions would be kept informed throughout the process.

English: [http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160616/local/unions-warn ...](http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160616/local/unions-warn...)

Netherlands

Migrant workers and the role of recruitment agencies

June 28, 2016

The NGO Fairwork and research institute SOMO published a report on Polish migrant workers. The researchers interviewed over hundred Polish migrant workers all over the Netherlands on wages, discrimination, exploitation and sexual intimidation, social isolation and work pressure, health and lack of insurance. These workers still face long working days, unpaid overtime, sexual intimidation and threats, despite a series of measures the government took since 2011 to improve the situation of Polish migrant

workers. Because of their dependency on recruitment agencies, Polish migrant workers remain extremely vulnerable to exploitation.

English: [http://www.fairwork.nu/actueel/nieuws_van_fairwork/profitting-from-dependency ...](http://www.fairwork.nu/actueel/nieuws_van_fairwork/profitting-from-dependency...)

The report: [http://www.fairwork.nu/assets/structured-files ...](http://www.fairwork.nu/assets/structured-files...)

Plea for a new social contract

June 27, 2016

A former leader of trade union confederation CNV published a feature on the socio-economic situation in the country. The gap between the employed and the unemployed is growing, the economy is recovering, but the total unemployment is still twice as high as before the eve of the crisis and the dream of an inclusive society (the 'participation society') is more elusive than ever. The author recommends a new social contract, based on more responsibility for regions to create their own inclusive labour market. He wants to encourage self-employment but combat excesses in low paid work and limiting the social security risks. Another idea is to put the basic income on the agenda, or some form of negative income tax so that those who are structurally and long-term unable to participate still have a viable financial basis.

English: <http://www.dutchnews.nl/features/2016/06/its-time-for-a-new-social-contract/>

Schiphol ground handlers successful

June 8, 2016

Security and other ground workers at Schiphol Airport celebrated two important wins in their fight for better conditions and improved security. KLM has been forced to drop its plans to include in the collective bargaining negotiations with the trade unions the outsourcing of 6,000 of the 17,000 ground workers' jobs at Schiphol. The widespread discontent of the baggage handlers, depot, check-in and other workers led to huge participation in the FNV action day and demonstration outside KLM's head office on 19 May. Within a day, KLM agreed to drop the proposals and start the negotiations with a clean slate. There will be further actions to keep up the pressure until the negotiations conclude in early July 2016. Following a series of short stoppages – organised via SMS messaging – Schiphol and its security companies agreed on 2 June, to employ at least 40 more security workers, to reduce standing time during passenger control to two hours (in line with the latest scientific recommendations), and to introduce climate control.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/june/schiphol-ground-workers ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/june/schiphol-ground-workers...)

Central bank in for wage increase

June 2, 2016

During the presentation of its half-yearly report on the economic perspectives and developments, the management of the National Bank has revealed that the declining purchase power, due to the decrease of direct labour and a diminishing of the middle segment on the labour market, endangers the economic development. The growth of flexible jobs leads to a serious fall of the labour income ratio against growing profits on capital. According to the bank's spokesperson a 'differentiated' pay rise is, therefore, necessary.

English: [http://www.dnb.nl/en/news/news-and-archive/persberichten-2016 ...](http://www.dnb.nl/en/news/news-and-archive/persberichten-2016...)

Dutch: [http://www.volkskrant.nl/economie/dnb-half-miljoen-vaste-banen-weg ...](http://www.volkskrant.nl/economie/dnb-half-miljoen-vaste-banen-weg...)

Norway

Oil workers put pressure on talks

June 30, 2016

Energy companies and trade unions began two-day wage talks in a bid to avert a strike that would cut output from Europe's largest oil producer by six percent, the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association (NOG) said. The trade unions are seeking pay increases in line with other industries while producers want workers to refrain from seeking such increases and to accept more flexible work practices citing still weak oil prices. State-mediated wage talks so far in 2016 have resulted in wage increases of around 2.4 percent. Union leaders said the talks would be difficult, but added they aim to come to an agreement with employers within that frame.

English: [http://in.reuters.com/article/norway-oil-strike ...](http://in.reuters.com/article/norway-oil-strike...)

Strike averted in offshore sector

June 22, 2016

Workers on the offshore oil drilling rigs signed a wage deal on 22 June, avoiding a strike. Workers will get a 0.5 percent pay rise, said the state-appointed mediator, who brokered the deal. Some 280 rig workers had threatened to strike if the talks failed, including staff on Rowan Companies' Viking and Gorilla rigs, and on the Statoil-operated Heidrun, Statfjord, Aasgard, Volve and Oseberg fields. The price of North Sea crude oil, Norway's top export, has fallen by some 60 percent since 2014, resulting in about 40,000 layoffs in the industry, according to the Norwegian Ship-owners Association, which negotiated on behalf of rig firms. It's estimated that another 15,000 will lose their jobs before activity levels recover. As part of the wage deal, it is agreed that those being laid off will have the right for a two-year period to be rehired if an employer increases staffing. In return, both unions and employers will contribute to identifying potential cost cuts, the state mediator said.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-norway-oil-rowan ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-norway-oil-rowan...)

Poland

Pay of minimum wage to transit truckers still debated

June 23, 2016

Poland has strongly opposed to German and French moves to set a minimum wage for foreign truck drivers, saying this would infringe the principles of a European single market and freedom of services. Germany, where average wages are much higher than in Poland, introduced a minimum rate of 8.50 euro an hour for lorry drivers in 2015, dealing a blow to Polish transport companies, which have the second-largest truck fleet in Europe. France is planning to introduce a law, which would be applicable to lorries transiting through France. In May 2015, the European Commission launched a legal procedure against Berlin, citing an infringement of European rules. The commission has also sent a letter of formal notice to Paris, the first stage of legal proceedings. In the meantime, other countries have joined the protest of the Polish authorities.

English: [http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/258584,No-minimum-wage ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/258584,No-minimum-wage...)

Background article by Eurofound: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories...)

Trade union for Ukrainian workers set up

June 14, 2016

Ukrainians willing to work in Poland are frequently cheated by both Ukrainian and Polish employers. Therefore, workers have established a trade union, assisted by their Polish colleagues. Key objectives are to improve working conditions and try to increase salaries for Ukrainian migrant workers. Around one million Ukrainians are employed in Poland. The aim is equal pay from 2017.

English: [http://uatoday.tv/society/ukrainian-workers-trade-union-set-up-in-warsaw ...](http://uatoday.tv/society/ukrainian-workers-trade-union-set-up-in-warsaw...)

[http://www.thenews.pl/1/6/Artykul/255213,Polish-labor-unions-want-to-set-up-organization ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/6/Artykul/255213,Polish-labor-unions-want-to-set-up-organization...)

Portugal

Airport handling unions call 3-day strike for July

June 30, 2016

The trade unions representing handling and passenger assistance workers at the country's airports – Faro, Porto, Lisbon, Beja, Madeira and the Azores – have announced a three-day-strike from 1 July. The strike is against the liberalisation of the handling sector, against the low salary model, and precarious employment conditions which have dragged on from year to year at national airports. The strike will affect leading handling companies Groundforce and Portway, but also covers employees of temping agencies and outsourced services working in the field.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/biggest-airport-strikes-ever ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/biggest-airport-strikes-ever...)

March for public education

June 24, 2016

Lisbon was the location for a massive March for public education. The event was organised by several organisations, including the trade union Federação Nacional dos Professores (FENPROF), to express the

view that it is unacceptable to fund private schools with public money. The march celebrated the public school, known as 'a school of all colours,' as a common good representing quality education, diversity, inclusion, and democracy. It also demanded adequate funding for public education.

English: <https://www.ei-ie.org/en/news ...>

Return of 35-hour week

June 16, 2016

The president of the country has approved the law re-establishing a 35-hour week for the state sector workers, which was approved in parliament at the beginning of June. The law that brings back a 35-hour week, after the previous government put it up to 40 hours on troika suggestion, was passed by all the left-wing parties and rejected by the two centre-right parties which were in the coalition government that reintroduced the 40-hour week.

English: <http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/president-approves-return ...>

Romania

Alarming figures about doctors who would like to go abroad

June 21, 2016

More than 82% of the young doctors would like to emigrate, and almost 30% of them are seriously thinking about this alternative, according to a study presented by the Bucharest College of Physicians. The doctors' main reasons for wanting to emigrate are the low wages, as well as the material conditions in healthcare units, overtime, and the lack of support for research. Some of them also think of going to work abroad because they want professional recognition and affirmation.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/young-doctors-romania-think-work-abroad ...>

Press statement of the College (in Romanian): <https://www.cmb.ro/presa ...>

IMF comments on minimum wage

June 15, 2016

The decision to increase the gross minimum wage up to RON 1,250 (280 euro), starting 1 May 2016, has not been welcomed by the IMF. According to the fund representative, the minimum wage increases faster than labour productivity, which will affect the local companies' competitiveness, discourages investments, and curves the employees' desire to improve. The IMF representative said that the country's minimum wage went above the EU average after the recent increase in May.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/imf-minimum-wage-increases ...>

Public sector wage improves

June 9, 2016

The Government adopted an emergency ordinance that increases the salaries of the public sector employees. About 650,000 people will benefit from this law, and the budget impact amounts to 193 million euro for 2016 and 577 million euro in 2017. The emergency ordinance tries to remove the inequalities in the public sector wage system. A part of the law's provisions will enter into force starting August 1, 2016, whereas the whole salary grid will be applied in December 2017.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-government-adopts-ordinance ...>

Serbia

Average monthly wage crosses 400 euro

June 8, 2016

The average salary has crossed the 400-euro mark 'for the first time' amounting to 401 euro in April. The prime minister stated that what the government wanted has happened - incomes in the private sector have

increased. He added to expect incomes in the public sector to be higher at the end of 2016 and the beginning of 2017.

English: <http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business ...>

Slovakia

PSA introduces fourth working shift

June 24, 2016

The plant of carmaker PSA Peugeot Citroën in Trnava is going to implement a unique weekend shift to produce the new car model. The weekend shift will bring jobs for 570 production operators, 170 skilled maintenance workers, administrators of equipment and car repairers, 46 team leaders and 8 managers. Their salary will range from 70 to 80 percent of the income in a three-shift system. About 500 employees will work 9.5 hours on Saturday morning or afternoon and on Sunday night and others will work 10 hours from Friday to Sunday. The company managers see the introduction of a new shift as a job opportunity for students or those people who cannot work during the week due to family issues.

English: <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20199178/psa-introduces-fourth-working-shift.html>

No agreement on labour force reduction at U.S. Steel

June 2, 2016

Steelmaker U.S. Steel Košice continues the reduction of its labour force with another 29 work positions scrapped as of 1 June, for the third consecutive month. Local trade unions call this a salami method by which the company avoids mass layoffs that start at 30 work positions. They believe that the steelmaker is suffering due to the bad situation at the corporation's American plants. In the three rounds of dismissal some employees accepted other jobs while others signed agreements on the termination of their work contracts. The trade unions have appealed to the Labour Inspectorate to examine whether the Collective Agreement and Labour Code were observed in the lay-offs.

English: <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20180109/trade-unions-u-s-steel-kosice-paying ...>

Slovenia

Assessment: gradual approach better than shock therapy

June 27, 2016

In an interesting assessment of the country's 25th anniversary of Independence, a comparison is made between the economic policy in countries like Poland and the gradual approach in Slovenia. Thanks to a solid and traditional economic backbone, with an excellent infrastructure, a well-educated workforce and a strategic location between the Balkans and Western Europe, the country has one of the highest per capita GDP's and is one of the wealthiest countries in Central Europe.

English: <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/slovenia-25-years-of-independence ...>

Spain

Wage structure in 2014

June 28, 2016

The statistical office INE published final data on the country's wage structure over the whole year 2014. The average gross wage in 2014 slightly increased with 0.7% to 22,858 euro. The data reveal large differences in the average annual wage of workers per occupation and sector, type of contract, regions and nationality. The poorest paid jobs can be found in hospitality, administrative work and cultural activities, the best paid jobs are in financial services and energy. Jobs in the property sector recovered most in 2014 in pay terms.

The data (Spanish): <http://www.ine.es/en/prensa ...>

Metro workers Madrid continue with walkouts

June 19, 2016

Metro workers have started a strike because they feel that management is trying to deregulate their working conditions to the detriment of the service. The strike comes after six months of fruitless negotiations, said union representatives. The workers are demanding changes to their working hours and practices, including finishing their shifts at the same station where they start. The negotiations have continued without success.

English: [http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/06/13/inenglish ...](http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/06/13/inenglish...)

Spanish: [http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2016/06/19/madrid ...](http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2016/06/19/madrid...)

Four-day metro strike in Barcelona

June 1, 2016

Barcelona Metro workers held a four-day strike over pay and new working conditions in their collective bargaining agreement. During the four day strike the metro was running a 'minimum service' of 40 percent during rush hour - between 7am and 9am and between 4pm and 6pm - while a mere 20 percent of trains were running between 8.30pm and 10pm. Barcelona Metro admitted the trains running were 'insufficient'.

English: [http://www.thelocal.es/20160530/chaos-in-barcelona ...](http://www.thelocal.es/20160530/chaos-in-barcelona...)

Sweden

A labour market without contracts

June 20, 2016

Trade union Unionen has entered an agreement with German IG Metall. The aim is to find tools to organise the growing part of the labour force which works through online platforms. There are some 700,000 so-called crowd workers in Sweden – people who to various degrees work in an online platform-based labour market, also known as the sharing economy or 'gig economy'. Many of these online-based jobs are temporary. A majority of studies shows that some 50 percent of jobs could disappear in the next 20 years as a result of automation, digitalisation and the introduction of robots.

English: [http://www.nordiclbourjournal.org/i-fokus/in-focus-2016 ...](http://www.nordiclbourjournal.org/i-fokus/in-focus-2016...)

SAS pilots' strike ends

June 14, 2016

Scandinavian airline SAS had to cancel a majority of its Swedish and European flights after pilots rejected an improved pay offer and their strike pushed into a fourth day. The strike began after the pilots based in Stockholm rejected the airline's offer of a 2.2 percent wage increase, insisting on a hike of 3.5 percent, and attempts by a mediator to broker a deal failed. Shortly after, the parties could agree on a new collective bargaining agreement and all flights were resumed. The deal to end the strike includes a 2.2 percent pay increase and a new pay scale for young pilots. They now will have much better salaries.

English: [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/World/2016/Jun-14/356990-swedish-sas-pilots ...](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/World/2016/Jun-14/356990-swedish-sas-pilots...)

Switzerland

Law on dismissals assessed

June 22, 2016

In a study that assesses the legal provisions related to (protection of) dismissal because of trade union actions the conclusion is drawn that the current legal acts are to a certain unconstitutional and not in line with the relevant ILO-provisions. The published (second) volume of the detailed study focused on the right to strike and the protection of workers involved in strikes. The authors found large deficits in the protection of workers against union-busting and unfair dismissals. The legal act (*Obligationenrecht - OR*) violates fundamental rights that are enshrined in ILO-conventions and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The study can be found (in French) on the ILO-website:

[https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/fr/home/Arbeit/Internationale_Arbeitsfragen ...](https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/fr/home/Arbeit/Internationale_Arbeitsfragen...)

German: [http://www.sgb.ch/themen/arbeit/arbeitsrechte/artikel/details/schutz ...](http://www.sgb.ch/themen/arbeit/arbeitsrechte/artikel/details/schutz...)

French: <http://www.uss.ch/themes/travail/droit-du-travail/article/details/droits-syndicaux ...>

Basic income rejected in referendum

June 5, 2016

Voters have rejected by a wide margin the proposal to provide a universal basic income grant to all citizens. National projections showed around 78 percent of voters rejected the initiative. Voters had to decide whether the wealthy country should grant all citizens an unconditional basic income (UBI) that supporters say will tackle poverty and inequality. Foreigners who have been legal residents for at least five years would also be eligible for the grant. The amount to be paid was not determined before the vote, but the group behind the initiative has suggested paying 2,300 euro a month to each adult.

English: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/switzerland-referendum-basic-income ...>

German: <http://www.grundeinkommen.ch/das-medienecho-zur-abstimmung/>

Turkey

Nestle workers strike

June 21, 2016

Over 900 workers went on strike at a Nestle factory in the north-western province of Bursa on 21 June after the company and the trade union, Tek Gıda-İş, could not reach a collective agreement over disputes in wage raises. The company claimed that the proposed increase in pay and benefits was, on average, double the inflation rate. The workers came together in front of the Karacabey factory, where Nestle's chocolate, coffee and water production is carried out. Tek Gıda-İş Union President said the nearly 900 workers at the factory are union members and had gone on strike. He said the collective bargaining meetings started at the beginning of the year and had continued up to now. Production has now halted in the factory. In line with legal responsibilities, a certain number of workers are inside the factory for maintenance, but all other employees are outside striking. The workers are demanding a 600-Turkish Lira raise in wages on an equal basis but the employer came with a lower offer and the parties could not reach a common point.

English: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/nearly-900-nestle-workers-go-on-strike ...>

Trade unionism under pressure

June 8, 2016

Trade union IndustriAll published an interesting profile of the Turkish trade unions. The profile clarifies that the legislator has enacted unreachable collective bargaining thresholds in the Law on Trade Unions and Collective Labour Agreements. A union that wants to sign a workplace level collective bargaining agreement must organise at least 1% of the entire workforce in that industrial sector. In the meantime, there are also workplace level thresholds of 50%, and for companies with more than one workplace it is 40%. According to the legislation, employers can easily file a complaint at the local court claiming that the union concerned does not have sufficient majority to be a bargaining partner. It is common practice amongst employers to get rid of union presence at the workplace, or at least to stall the collective bargaining process.

English: <http://www.industriall-union.org/profile-unions-in-turkey-holding-the-line ...>

United Kingdom

Union statements on Brexit vote

June 24, 2016

In response to the vote to leave the EU several trade unions have issued official statements. UNITE, the biggest union in private sector, said that the country will face profound change. UNISON stated that the union will be working in the coming period to hold the leave campaigners to the promises they've made – that there will be more money for the NHS, and that the workers' rights at work will remain intact. TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady said in a comment that the British people have made their views clear. As the UK prepares to leave the EU, the first priority now is to protect jobs and defend the living standards of working people. The government must urgently set out a plan to defend UK industry and keep British jobs. That means defending the pound and stimulating the economy. Working people must not pay the price for the decision to leave. In its Advice before the vote the TUC had warned that future governments would have

a pretty much unconstrained freedom of action in relation to those areas currently governed by EU social and employment law.

English: [https://www.tuc.org.uk/node ...](https://www.tuc.org.uk/node...)
[https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Brexit ...](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Brexit...)
<https://www.ucatt.org.uk/joint-union-statement-following-referendum-vote>
<https://www.unison.org.uk/news/2016/06/unison-statement-on-the-eu-referendum-result/>
[http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/unite-the-union-statement ...](http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/unite-the-union-statement...)

Museum workers reach deal in pay dispute

June 9, 2016

Museum workers in Wales have voted to accept a deal aimed at resolving a long-running dispute over pay. Members of the Public and Commercial Services union at National Museum Wales, who have been on indefinite strike, backed the agreement by almost four to one. At the end of April 2016, the PCS union, which represents National Museum Wales staff, including those at the National Wool Museum in Drefach Felindre, escalated its dispute over the removal of extra payments for weekend working by announcing it would start an indefinite strike. The union claimed that some workers were paid a low wage and yet still work 35 weekends a year. The row flared over allowances for working weekends and bank holidays. Industrial action will now end, and Wales's national museums will reopen fully to the public over the coming days.

English: [http://www.itv.com/news/wales/update/2016-06-25/welsh-museum-workers-reach ...](http://www.itv.com/news/wales/update/2016-06-25/welsh-museum-workers-reach...)

Union action in university pay dispute

June 9, 2016

At its Congress 2016, held in Liverpool from 1-3 June, the University and College Union (UCU) set out the next steps in its dispute with university employers over pay. The trade union members working in higher education voted to escalate their action with a marking and setting-of-work boycott in the autumn term, if the dispute has not been settled. The dispute arose following a pay offer of 1.1 percent from the universities' employers.

English: [https://www.ei-ie.org/en/news ...](https://www.ei-ie.org/en/news...)

385,000 manufacturing jobs lost since 2007

June 6, 2016

A study discussed at the GMB Congress in Bournemouth shows that the number of people employed in the manufacturing industries in the UK has declined by 385,500 in the seven years since 2008 from 3.36m to 2.97m people. The recovery cannot be put on a sound footing and a further recession is inevitable unless the Government puts in place a strategy to close the huge and unsustainable balance of payments deficit GMB Congress told. The study shows that the UK balance of payments deficit has grown from 3.6% of GDP in 2008 to over 5% in 2015. It also shows that manufacturing output fell by 12% between 2007 and 2009 and while there has been a recovery since then output in 2015 is still 6% below the 2007 pre-recession level.

English: [http://www.gmb.org.uk/assets/media/documents ...](http://www.gmb.org.uk/assets/media/documents...)

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