

collective bargaining

Issue 11/2016 | November

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
UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



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European sources

Fraudulent contracting in the EU

November 21, 2016

A Eurofound report looks at fraudulent contracting practices across the EU and examines measures initiated by national authorities, including labour inspectorates and the social partners, to identify, prevent and combat such practices. While governments and public bodies focus largely on improving regulation – reducing loopholes in legislation and strengthening detection and inspection – the social partners endeavour to achieve compliance, particularly through organising information and awareness-raising initiatives. Based on 29 national reports, covering the EU28 and Norway, the research finds that the potential of collective bargaining to respond to the challenges of fraudulent use of contracting work is largely underexploited.

English: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2016/industrial-relations ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2016/industrial-relations...)

The report: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites...)

International comparison and case study on flex work

November 17, 2016

Flexible employment constitutes a relatively large and increasing share of the labour market in many countries. In this study with 6 country cases, the Netherland Bureau for Economic Analysis CPB analyses the extent to which the growth in flexible employment can be related to global economic trends and country-specific institutions. One of the advantages of flexible employment is that it allows firms to react more easily to demand shocks. The presence of a significant share of flexible employment does, however, present several policy questions, particularly as it may lead to segmentation and inequality in the labour market, because workers with flexible contracts generally enjoy lower job and income security.

English: [https://www.cpb.nl/sites ...](https://www.cpb.nl/sites...)

Survey on working conditions

November 17, 2016

In the 6th European Working Conditions Survey, Eurofound presents the results of interviews with 44,000 workers across Europe. Both employees and self-employed were interviewed. They were asked about their employment conditions, working hours, exposure to risks, work organisation, skills use and autonomy, work–life balance, health and well-being. Overall, structural inequalities and differences in terms of gender, employment status and occupation are still significant. The section on earnings reveals that most workers are concentrated at the lower end of the income distribution, with very few at the upper end. The income of men is substantially higher than that of women, partly due to differences in working hours

English: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-working-conditions-surveys ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-working-conditions-surveys...)

The report: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites...)

Working live period structurally prolonged

November 14, 2016

According to Eurostat data the expected duration of working life in the EU stood at 35.4 years on average in 2015, up by 1.9 years compared with 2005. In detail over this 10-year period, duration of working life has increased more rapidly for women (32.8 years in 2015 compared with 30.2 years in 2005, or +2.6 years) than for men (37.9 years in 2015 vs. 36.7 years in 2005, or +1.2 year). Across the EU Member States, the average working life was in 2015 expected to be the longest in Sweden (41.2 years), ahead of the Netherlands (39.9 years), Denmark (39.2 years), the United Kingdom (38.6 years) and Germany (38.0 years).

English: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents ...](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents...)

Not everyone benefits from labour market upturn

November 14, 2016

The Bertelsmann Foundation writes in its Social Justice in the EU Index Report 2016 that three years after the economic and financial crisis reached its peak, the employment rate has increased. Yet major challenges remain: 4.6 million young Europeans are without jobs, many people cannot live on what they earn despite working full time, and the risk of poverty is acute for parts of the population in several EU member states. The study reveals a worrying trend: more and more Europeans are at risk of poverty despite having a

permanent job. In 2015, that was true of 7.8 percent of all EU citizens employed full time – compared to 7.2 percent in 2013. Moreover, almost one in four EU citizens (118 million, or 23.7 percent) is still threatened by poverty or social exclusion. A number of factors are responsible for this development, including an increase in low-wage jobs and the labour market's division into regular and atypical employment.

English: [http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/topics/aktuelle-meldungen/2016/november ...](http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/topics/aktuelle-meldungen/2016/november...)

The Social Justice report: [http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin ...](http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin...)

Austria

Metal workers come to an agreement

November 7, 2016

The trade unions PRO-GE and GPA-djp and the Association of Austrian Machinery and Metalware (FMMI), reached an agreement on a 1.68% salary increase on average for the 120,000 employees in the metal sector. The agreement is valid for 12 months from 1 November 2016 on. Part of the deal is a 2% increase for wages at the low end of the pay scale and a 1.75% increase for apprentices pay. As usual, this deal has set the scene for other metal branches. Shortly after a similar agreement was concluded in the metal mining and gas branches and the vehicle industry.

German: [http://www.proge.at/servlet/Content ...](http://www.proge.at/servlet/Content...)

Flyer with the general result (in German): [http://www.gpa-djp.at/cs/Satellite ...](http://www.gpa-djp.at/cs/Satellite...)

Contract for the delivery of services

November 1, 2016

The Chamber of Labour produced an instructive leaflet on a contract for the provision of services for workers that are confronted with offers to work as an independent worker. By using questions and answers several important issues (taxation, honorary, security) that relate to this type of contract are raised. The leaflet explains the differences between a (commercial) contract for the provision of services and a labour contract.

German: [https://media.arbeiterkammer.at/wien/PDF/Publikationen/ArbeitundRecht ...](https://media.arbeiterkammer.at/wien/PDF/Publikationen/ArbeitundRecht...)

Belgium

Care workers demonstrate for better jobs

November 24, 2016

Trade unions from the social care sector staged a major demonstration in Brussels, to protest against increased work pressure as a result of continuing austerity measures. The unions demand investment of the government in the sector and oppose the commercialisation of care and culture. The demonstration was joined by workers from the cultural sector. Some 20,000 protesters from the so-called 'white sector' (social care workers) targeted the increasing work pressure, demanding more staff and better pay.

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

<http://www.epsu.org/article/solidarity-belgian-unions-fighting-jobs-and-quality-care>

Self-employed men earn 50% more than women

November 24, 2016

Pay gaps between men and women are steadily shrinking. However, for the self-employed, income disparities remain extremely high, according to the figures from the National Institute for the Self-employed Social Security (INASTI). The data show that self-employed men earn an average 50% more than their female colleagues. Part of the gap between the two groups is explained by the pay differences in the sectors in which men and women choose to work. However, there are also differences within the same sector. In retail, for example, a man earns an average of 11,000 euro per year more than a woman.

English: [http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/7009/self-employed-men-earn-50-more ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/7009/self-employed-men-earn-50-more...)

National Labour Council examines employment relation

November 22, 2016

Based on advices from the so-called paritarian committees in different sectors the National Labour Council has formulated an intermediate report with an assessment of the Labour Relations Act. In its report the Council formulates the worries and demands as expressed by the sectors, in particularly related to an effective policy against bogus self-employment. The Council underlined that the current Labour Relations Act can contribute to a more effective enforcement policy against cross-border social dumping practices.

French: <http://www.nar-cnt.be/RAPPORT/rapport-101-FR.pdf>

Dutch: <http://www.nar-cnt.be/RAPPORT/rapport-101-NL.pdf>

Bulgaria

Wage data for Q3 in 2016

November 10, 2016

In the third quarter of 2016, compared to the second quarter of 2016, the average monthly wage decreased by 0.5% to 941 BGN. The highest decrease in wages and salaries was reported in 'Financial and insurance activities' - 8.6%, and 'Real estate activities' - 2.8%. Compared to the third quarter of 2015, the average monthly wage in the third quarter of 2016 rose by 7.7%. The highest growth rates were recorded in economic activities: 'Public administration and defence; compulsory social security' - 10.0%, 'Manufacturing' - 9.7%, and 'Human health and social work activities' - 9.6%. Compared to a year earlier, the average monthly wages and salaries in the public sector grew by 6.8% while in private sector by 8.0%.

English: <http://www.nsi.bg/sites ...>

Croatia

First lawsuits against broken promises

November 23, 2016

The government is facing mass lawsuits for a claim of more than a billion kuna in total that could be filed by public sector employees due to the government's non-compliance with an agreement to increase their base salary by 6%, which was signed in 2009. Under the agreement, when GDP growth reaches the average of two percent over two consecutive quarters, the base salary must be increased by six percent. These conditions were met at the beginning of this year. On 23 November 2016, the Municipal Court in Zagreb received the first four lawsuits filed by teachers who are backed by the Union of Croatian Education Workers, Revival.

English: <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/business/14966-trade-union-files-lawsuits ...>

Trade unions against tax reform

November 7, 2016

New tax reform proposals were presented to the social partners before a meeting of the Economic and Social Council. The Independent Croatian Unions and the Federation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia are against the government proposed tax reform. The unions criticised the abolition of the lowest income tax bracket of 12 percent and the reduction of the maximum rate from 40 to 36 percent. According to them this will only increase social inequality and it will benefit those with the highest incomes.

English: <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/item/14779-trade-unions-warn ...>

Cyprus

Employment outlook

November 3, 2016

The statistical service published updated employment data. In October 2016 the number of registered unemployed increased to 37,475 persons in comparison to 37,304 in September 2016. In comparison with October 2015, a decrease of 8,9% was recorded, which was mainly observed in the sectors of construction, manufacturing, trade, transport, accommodation and food service activities, public administration and to

newcomers in the labour market.

English: <http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics ...>

Czech Republic

Minister launches gender equality campaign

November 25, 2016

The Minister for human rights has unveiled a campaign in support of gender equality which should be launched by the end of 2016. The campaign will focus on domestic violence as well as on ways of better combining work and family life. The minister pointed out that women are on average paid 22 percent less than men in the Czech Republic.

English: <http://radio.cz/en/section/news/human-rights-minister-launches-equality-campaign>

Miners threaten to take action

November 24, 2016

Miners' unions at the coal mining company OKD have given notice of the possibility of strike action. The unions allege that the company management is undermining existing collective agreements and social plan, under which miners leaving work at the Paskov mine would be entitled to 12 months' pay. The hard coal mining company OKD will terminate mining at its Paskov mine by the end of March 2017. Around 700 miners are set to lose their jobs as a result of the closure. The rest of the employees will be moved to other mines that are still in operation.

English: <http://radio.cz/en/section/news/okd-mining-unions-threaten-to-take-strike-action>

Tripartite agreement to boost long-term paid sick leave

November 21, 2016

In a tripartite meeting, the unions, employers, and the government have agreed to boost paid sick leave in the case of long-term illness. The government is hoping to tack one of three possible options discussed so far onto a health insurance amendment. The prime minister has already said he will back a proposal put forward by the labour ministry, counting on a rise of six percent in paid sick leave from the 31st day off.

English: <http://radio.cz/en/section/news/tripartite-agrees-to-boost-long-term-paid-sick-leave>

Pension pay and income data

November 4, 2016

The Social security Administration (CSSZ) published data on pension pay and wages. The average old-age pension amounted to 11,441 crowns (423 euro) in September, which was 107 crowns more than a year ago. In all, almost 2.4 million old-age pensions were paid, roughly 18,500 more than a year ago. Almost 600,000 of them were paid for early retirement. As before, men receive on average higher pensions as women. The former were paid an average 12,643 crowns a month, which was 2,260 crowns more than women, whose average pension amounted to 10,383 crowns. The average salary rose by 1,074 crowns, or 4.2 percent, to 26,898 crowns (995 euro) a month by mid-2016.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2016/11/04/average-old-age-pension-rises ...>

Denmark

Vestas announces job cuts

November 17, 2016

The turbine producer Vestas has revealed it will be letting go 350 employees at its plant in Lem in west Jutland. The company said that the move was necessary in order to strengthen its ability to compete. The redundancies, making up over a third of the total workforce in Lem, will take place at the end of 2016. Vestas employs around 4,600 people in Denmark – 2,400 of which work in production. On a global scale, the company employs 21,900 people. The news comes shortly after the company revealed strong financial

results for the first nine months of 2016.

English: <http://cphpost.dk/news/business/vestas-blowing-off-350-jobs-in-jutland.html>

Trade unions critical about government in Uber-case

November 11, 2016

Trade union confederation LO expressed deep disappointment towards the government policy in the Uber-case. LO observes that the responsible ministry of justice does not act to stop the illegal driving in several cities. This policy is in stark contrast with the opinion of the average LO-worker, according to a survey, which shows that Uber should be banned on the basis of the judgement this summer which convicted six Uber-drivers for illegal taxicab-driving. LO has, from the outset, called for a taskforce to be appointed with the participation of the Police, the Tax and Customs Administration (SKAT) and other relevant authorities, who would be able to efficiently put a stop to the illegal taxi driving.

English: [http://www.lo.dk/English ...](http://www.lo.dk/English...)

OECD report on well-being

November 7, 2016

An OECD report provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in the major Danish cities, by looking at a wide range of dimensions that shape people's lives. It contains both objective and subjective indicators meant to help policy makers, citizens and other stakeholders to better understand living conditions not only among cities but also among the different neighbourhoods within cities. Chapter 3 includes data and graphs that illustrate the spatial segregation of people by income and employment status. Spatial segregation is a situation where people sort within the space of a city-region in a way that generates an over-concentration in specific places of people who are similar with respect to certain socio-economic aspects, such as income or socio-economic status.

English: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/well-being ...](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/well-being...)

Full report: [http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/urban-rural-and ...](http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/urban-rural-and...)

Nordic Council wants to simplify border obstacles for commuters

November 6, 2016

The refugee crisis engaged the participants at the Nordic Council's session in Copenhagen. Border controls introduced one year ago between Sweden and Denmark run contrary to the open Nordic labour market. A joint Nordic control at the border between Germany and Denmark is suggested as a solution for easing the problems faced by Öresund commuters.

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

Estonia

Wage growth slows down

November 24, 2016

According to Statistics Estonia, monthly gross wages and salaries averaged 1,119 euro in the third quarter of 2016, marking a 7.1 increase compared to the same period in 2015 but a decline of 3.8 percent against the second quarter of 2016. The slowdown of the rise in average wages was mainly due to a decrease in irregular bonuses and premiums and an increase in the number of paid leave days. Irregular bonuses and premiums excluded, the average monthly gross wages and salaries fell 2.6 percent compared to the previous quarter.

English: [http://news.err.ee/v/business ...](http://news.err.ee/v/business...)

Lower pay for seasonal workers

November 16, 2016

The Constitutional Committee unanimously supported adding a provision to the bill of amendments to the Aliens Act which would allow businesses to pay less than the average wage to seasonal workers coming from third countries. The Constitutional Committee also unanimously supported amending a bill of amendments to the Aliens Act, the Citizen of the EU Act and the Identity Documents Act, initiated by the government, by

adding a clause according to which aliens issued a temporary residence permit for enterprise as big investors would be excluded from the immigration quota.

English: [http://news.err.ee ...](http://news.err.ee...)

Finland

Unions discuss new bargaining model

November 30, 2016

Trade unions are rethinking their negotiation strategy. The basic idea is for pay rises in collective agreements to be linked somehow to those for the export industry. The pay rise ceiling should in this model be calculated on the basis of the competitiveness of the export sector, employment, productivity and the balance of the public economy. Since spring the export industry unions and employers associations have been negotiating on how to build such a model. So far this has not led to any clear resolution as to how this can be achieved.

English: [http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1141-export-industry ...](http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1141-export-industry...)

Trade union JHL opposes low paid labour market

November 18, 2016

Trade union JHL is strongly against proposals to create a low paid work market. This has been proposed by some politicians and business leaders recently as a way to improve the economy and create more jobs. The union considers that low pay will not improve the country's competitiveness, productivity or employees' motivation and proposed that the trade union federations draft a programme on pay policy for discussion with the government. The goal of this programme should be to improve the purchasing power of wage and salary earners, employment opportunities, and equal pay. It should also serve to advance solidarity among wage and salary earners by taking into account especially those with the lowest incomes.

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

Shipyard workers strike over competitiveness pact

November 3, 2016

Workers at the Helsinki dockyard of Russian-owned shipbuilder Arctech downed tools and walked off the job. The industrial action came during negotiations on the government's competitiveness pact by employer and employee representatives. Arctech chief executive described the action as an 'illegal strike'. Employees wanted to discuss issues such as wages as well as the a so-called 'survival clause' in the competitiveness deal, which may be invoked in cases when an employer runs into financial difficulty that could result in job cuts or changes to wage and salary agreements. The terms and conditions of the clause should be agreed by employer and employee representatives in collective bargaining talks. The trade unions said that employer representatives only wanted to discuss the proposal of extending working hours by 24 hours per year.

English: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/helsinki_shipyard_workers_down_tools ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/helsinki_shipyard_workers_down_tools...)

France

Restructuring at Airbus puts over 1,000 jobs at risk

November 23, 2016

According to trade union Force Ouvriere, restructuring plans at plane-maker Airbus (AIR.PA) could result in at least 1,000 job cuts, which will be spread between technical research, IT, strategy and legal services. Airbus Group announced it would merge with its main plane-making unit, in a move aimed at reducing bureaucracy and simplifying its brand. A European works council meeting scheduled for 1 December 2016 will discuss cutbacks in other services such as human resources, finance, and purchasing.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-airbus-redundancies ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-airbus-redundancies...)

Public finance agents on strike

November 15, 2016

To complaint about reduction of staff and closure of services, tax agents were striking throughout the country on 15 November 2016. The Public Finance agents were called to strike, by the trade unions Solidaires Finances public, CGT Public Finance and FO DGFIP. The objective of this action is to denounce downsizing and 'degradation of the public service', according to the unions calling for mobilisation. In total, 1,800 jobs are expected to be eliminated in the tax administration by the end of 2017. Meetings on the reorganisation have already taken place.

French: <http://www.lefigaro.fr/social/2016/11/15 ...>

Nationwide protest of nurses

November 8, 2016

Striking nurses held protests across the country in what was described as an 'unprecedented' movement aimed at raising the alarm call about the state of their profession, with lack of investment, lack of staff, being overworked, no time for patients. Hospital staff held protests including a march from Montparnasse to the health ministry in Paris to demonstrate their growing anger at their worsening conditions of work. Other hospital workers joined the protest. Union leaders have warned of an increasing number of suicide attempts due to burn-out. Staff are off sick as a result of exhaustion and those who retire are not replaced.

English: <http://www.thelocal.fr/20161108/why-french-nurses-are-staging-an-unprecedented ...>

Germany

Lufthansa dispute continues

November 28, 2016

Lufthansa pilots have warned they will strike again talks failed to resolve a long-running row over pay. The pilots' union, Vereinigung Cockpit, said the walkout would affect both short and long-haul flights. It is the 15th strike since April, with recently 2,800 flights cancelled in one week due to a four-day walkout by pilots. Vereinigung Cockpit wants an average annual pay rise of 3.7% for its 5,400 members, backdated to 2012. Lufthansa offered to increase wages by 2.4% in 2016, with an additional 2% rise in 2017. It said it would also provide a one-off payment of 1.8 months' pay. The union rejected this offer. The management is seeking to avert further strike through lawsuits; a first effort failed as the judges declared not to be responsible for the establishment of wages.

English: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/search?q=lufthansa>

<http://www.euronews.com/2016/11/24/lufthansa-pilots-strike-causes-travel-chaos ...>

German: <http://www.handelsblatt.com/unternehmen/handel-konsumgueter/lufthansa ...>

http://www.spiegel.de/thema/lufthansa_streik/

Massive job cuts at Volkswagen

November 26, 2016

An agreement at Volkswagen plans layoff in the range of some 30,000 in total, 23,000 of which in Germany. Months of discussions between trade union IG Metall, the VW Works Council and company management on VW's future, new technology and an efficient production system, have resulted in what the parties call a 'pact for the future'. The emissions scandal got the company into a serious crisis in the context of which the pressure was high to lay off. While the company also plans to create some 9000 new jobs in the electric vehicle division, the goal is to avoid layoffs and instead phase out the outdated jobs with natural fluctuation, partial retirement and early retirement schemes.

English: <http://www.industriall-union.org/volkswagen-job-security-until-2025-despite-cuts>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business ...>

German: <http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/unternehmen/volkswagen-17-500-jobs-bei-vw ...>

Act to improve position of temp workers

November 25, 2016

The Parliament approved amendments to the Committee on Labour and Social Affairs' Employment Act (AUG), which covers regulation of temporary employment and work contracts. The Committee on Labour and Social Affairs stated that the proposed changes to the Employee Leasing Act will come into effect on 1 April 2017. The draft Act, which was finally approved by the Bundesrat (the Federal Council), stipulates that temporary workers may only be used for 18 months at a client company in the future (unless a collective agreement governs a longer duration of use). They should also receive the same wages as the permanent staff

after nine months. Previous demands by the trade unions for more regulation of contracted work were not met, as employers' representatives succeeded in keeping this subject off the agenda.

English: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/working-conditions ...>

German: <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/deutschland/leiharbeit-bundesrat-billigt ...>

<http://www.bundesrat.de/SharedDocs/drucksachen ...>

Complete file Parliament (in German): <https://www.bundestag.de ...>

Vonovia workers plan strike actions

November 24, 2016

Workers at the property management division of the company Vonovia are prepared to strike before the end of 2016 to protest over wage negotiations and worsening conditions at the real estate group. According to a representative of the union Ver.di, a substantial number of Vonovia property management's employees are ready for industrial action. The management is very negative about any trade union involvement and not willing to negotiate a new collective agreement. A first warn strike was already held.

English: <http://www.reuters.com/article/vonovia-strike ...>

German: <http://www.handelsblatt.com/unternehmen/dienstleister/streik-vonovia ...>

<https://www.verdi.de/themen/nachrichten ...>

Refugees better educated than expected

November 14, 2016

Based on research results, released by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the director of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) has said that refugees actually have a better standard of education than previously thought. According to a study around 50,000 refugees found work in Germany between September 2015 and September 2016, and some 30,000 earn enough to make them subject to social insurance contributions. Most of the jobs are in logistics, warehousing, and agriculture.

English: <http://www.dw.com/en/refugees-in-germany-better-educated-than-expected ...>

The reports (in German): <http://doku.iab.de/arbeitsmarktdaten/Zuwanderungsmonitor ...>

<http://www.iab.de/194/section.aspx/Publikation ...>

Greece

Civil servants on strike

November 24, 2016

The trade union of civil servants (ADEDY) has organised a 24-hour nationwide strike to complain on the dramatic growth of part-time employment and demand the annulment of laws leading to drastic cuts in wages. The action is followed by ferryboats and cargo ships staff, sailors and government offices workers. Hospitals admit only emergency cases and medical staff protested against the shortage of doctors and insufficient resources for healthcare. During the action, demonstrations are being held in Athens and Thessaloniki. Students, pensioners, farmers and teachers also joined the protests in support of civil servants.

English: <http://www.novinite.com/articles/177626/Greek+Union+of+Civil+Servants ...>

Nationwide strike against reform

November 2, 2016

Trade union GSEE called for a nationwide strike on 8 December 2016 to protest against austerity measures and labour law reforms demanded by the country's official lenders as part of a crucial bailout review. GSEE, which represents about 2 million workers and pensioners in the private sector, said the 24-hour walkout would be a protest against the planned reforms.

English: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-eurozone-greece-strike ...>

Hungary

Teachers and minimum wage

November 28, 2016

The teachers' union PSZ stated that teachers have been worse off by as much as HUF 30,000 (96 euro) a month since the government eliminated a law tying their wages to minimum wage. According to PSZ, increases to the minimum wage for 2017 and 2018 recently mandated by parliament would have no impact on teachers' wages, as the basis for calculating them is no longer the actual minimum wage of any given year but rather that of 2014, which is already 8.5 percent less than the current minimum gross wage of HUF 111,000 (357 euro) and considerably less than the HUF 129,000 promised for 2017.

English: [http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/teachers-unaffected ...](http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/teachers-unaffected...)

Industrial action by Mercedes workers

November 24, 2016

Workers at Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz plant in Kecskemet, Hungary, held a two-hour strike on demand for higher wages. The action was supported by the Vasas trade union. The union formulated a demand for a 15% wage increase. According to a statement issued by the factory, management has already agreed on wage increases to be phased in over two years with the Free Trade Union of Technicians (MTSZSZ). Vasas has refused to sign that deal.

English: [http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/night-shift-workers-hold-two-hour-strike ...](http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/night-shift-workers-hold-two-hour-strike...)

Iceland

Teachers bargain pay increase

November 16, 2016

Trade union RÚV reports that about 1,000 primary school teachers, who are municipal workers, are currently in negotiations for a pay rise with the cooperation of a state arbitrator. The teachers have been working without a valid contract since last spring. Numerous grade school teachers have already walked off their jobs. As their grievances have been ongoing for months, they are considering to take collective action. Unions are already increasing their strike funds in preparation.

English: [https://grapevine.is/news/2016/11/16/labour-news ...](https://grapevine.is/news/2016/11/16/labour-news...)

Fishermen come to a pay deal

November 14, 2016

The fishermen's strike, which started on 10 November 2016, is over after the vessel owners and most fishermen have come to an agreement on salaries. The two sides were called to a meeting by the state conciliation mediator to establish if there was any common ground. The agreement will now go to a vote. Nevertheless, there are still disputes going on with fishermen in Grindavik and another union which will be negotiated locally. Most of the fleet will be returning to the fishing activities in the coming days. The strike threatened not only to hit the economy but it also could have caused serious problems for the Humber's fish processing industry, which employs up to 6,000 people.

English: <http://www.fishupdate.com/iceland-fish-strike-called-off/>

Ireland

Garda pay increases will not breach Lansdowne Road agreement

November 25, 2016

The government hopes that the Labour Court recommendation on Garda pay increases will form the basis for a final resolution of this dispute following the balloting of members of Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) and the Garda Representative Association (GRA). The outcome of this ballot among the Garda staff is still uncertain. The government considers that the recommendation will not breach the Lansdowne Road Agreement (on public service pay) and will be funded within existing budgetary allocations. However, the deal has triggered demands for an accelerated renegotiation of the Lansdowne Road Agreement - as unions say their members will be seeking similar increases. The government is facing follow-on pay claims from several trade unions representing nurses and public service employees in the wake of pay proposals made to gardaí to avert a threatened strike. Siptu, INMO, CPSU, Impact and Unite are all seeking an immediate discussion with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Ictu) in relation to its support

for the agreement. According to the craft trade union TEEU, the Lansdowne Road public service pay deal needs correction as a result of recent industrial relations developments.

English: [http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/prospect-of-new-garda-strikes ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/prospect-of-new-garda-strikes...)
[http://www.rte.ie/news ...](http://www.rte.ie/news...)
[http://www.irishtimes.com/business/financial-services/lansdowne-road-deal-needs-correction ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/business/financial-services/lansdowne-road-deal-needs-correction...)
[http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/five-unions-to-seek-new-pay-terms ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/five-unions-to-seek-new-pay-terms...)

SIPTU authorises strike ballots on public service pay

November 17, 2016

The National Executive Council of trade union SIPTU has authorised ballots by union members for industrial action and strike action on public service pay. SIPTU stated that throughout the very difficult years since the economic collapse of 2008 SIPTU has recommended acceptance of extremely difficult wage cuts across the private and the public service. The union always made it clear that when circumstances changed it would take the necessary actions to re-take lost ground. With the starting of economic recovery their members in manufacturing have been securing pay increases of the order of 2% - 3% per year. In private sector services new legally binding agreements in industries such as security and contract cleaning as well as increases for members in the retail and distribution sector were reached. Moreover, SIPTU representatives are calling for pay increases of the order of 4% in 2017 for workers in the private sector. SIPTU consider that the Lansdowne Road Agreement is not being applied equitably. Accordingly, the union has decided to authorise each recognised negotiating group of the union's members in the Public Service to conduct ballots seeking mandates for industrial action and/or strike action in pursuit of better terms.

English: [http://www.siptu.ie/media/pressreleases2016/fullstory ...](http://www.siptu.ie/media/pressreleases2016/fullstory...)

Bargaining collapsed in health care

November 14, 2016

The pressure to meet mounting public sector pay demands stepped up a gear as junior doctors confirmed they will ballot for strike action. Talks between the government and junior doctors have broken down over demands for the restoration of a €3,000 'living-out allowance' that was abolished a number of years ago. The Irish Medical Organisation said the Department of Health had informed its officials that talks had stopped as the issue would now be handled by the new public sector pay commission, which started up recently. The break-up of the talks was an effective breach of a High Court ruling in October, argued the IMO.

English: [http://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/hospital-doctors-threaten-strike-action ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/hospital-doctors-threaten-strike-action...)

Italy

Metalworkers come to an agreement

November 25, 2016

After more than a year of talks and several strike actions, the employer organisations Federmeccanica and Assital concluded a draft national collective agreement with the metal workers trade unions (FIOM-CGIL, FIM-CISL and UILM-UIL). The deal covers the mechanics and metal sector and applies to some 1.6 million workers. Remarkably, the FIOM trade union was fully involved in the drafting, although this union had not signed the previous national collective agreement. The duration of the agreement is four years. Main items concluded were: an ex-poste inflation correction, an on-off payment to compensate healthcare costs, extra hours for vocational (re)training, a welfare package for all workers and flexibility matters.

Italian: [http://www.corriere.it/economia/16_novembre_26/accordo-contratto-metalmeccanici ...](http://www.corriere.it/economia/16_novembre_26/accordo-contratto-metalmeccanici...)

Alitalia may cut up to 2,000 jobs

November 25, 2016

Alitalia could cut up to 2,000 jobs as controlling shareholder Etihad Airways pushes for sweeping changes to turn the loss-making airline around, according to sources close to the matter. The carrier may also ground at least 20 planes to cut certain unprofitable routes on domestic and regional services where it is struggling to compete with low-cost rivals and high-speed trains. It is likely to remain loss-making for the next two to three years even if it carries out the job cuts of around a sixth of its workforce and the plane groundings. The plans could put Etihad and Alitalia management on a collision course with unions - which have gone on strike over cost cuts in the past - as the busy Christmas travel season nears.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-alitalia-restructuring ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-alitalia-restructuring...)

Labour market data 2015

November 23, 2016

According to the social security and pension agency 1.67 million people received unemployment benefits in 2015, an increase with 6.9% compared to 2014. The increase could be due to 'more inclusive requirements to access social security benefits'. The provided data give further details on the regional distribution, the duration and the different age groups.

English: [http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/222013/unemployment-payments-up ...](http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/222013/unemployment-payments-up...)

The data (in Italian): [http://www.inps.it/docallegati/News/Documents/StatInBreve ...](http://www.inps.it/docallegati/News/Documents/StatInBreve...)

Foodora couriers strike

November 1, 2016

Couriers for the Foodora food delivery app have taken strike action, raising questions about the 'sharing economy' and how workers in that sector can organise. Riders are demanding better working conditions. In May 2016, they wrote a letter signed by 85 out of 100 workers with their demands. Finally, in July 2016, a meeting took place with the employers' representatives. Management said the contract could not be modified. However, in September Foodora issued a new contract, applying to all new riders, and from the end of November 2016, to all riders. This contract eliminates the fixed income and replaces it with a variable one: €2.70 per delivery. Since the beginning of October 2016, Foodora workers have been organising several actions (strikes, blockages of the service, and distribution of leaflets in restaurants affiliated to Foodora). The main demands are: abolition of the 'temporary collaboration' contract, as well as the per-delivery pay, and introduction of a flexible part-time contract. This kind of contract guarantees sick leave, insurance and vacation; a basic salary with a variable bonus per delivery; and the end of threats and disciplinary sanctions against the protesting workers.

English: [https://libcom.org/blog/foodora-strikes-italy-dark-side-sharing-economy ...](https://libcom.org/blog/foodora-strikes-italy-dark-side-sharing-economy...)

Latvia

Social protection expenditure increased by 5.9%

November 24, 2016

Data of the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) show that in 2015 social protection expenditure accounted for 3 619.7 million euros and, compared to 2014, it has grown by 201 million euros or 5.9%. Expenditure on support for families and children increased by 24.1%, expenditure on support for disabled persons by 7.8%, and social expenditure on sickness and health care by 7.5%. The expenditure growth was mostly affected by the deregulation of maternity, paternity and parental benefit size limits as well as amendments in the terms for granting childcare benefit that came into force on 1 October 2014. Rise was observed also in the expenditure on family state allowance.

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

Liechtenstein

Highest purchase power in Europe

November 10, 2016

Figures from market research institute GfK have revealed that around 673.5 million inhabitants from 42 European countries had some 9.18 trillion euro available in 2016 for spending and saving. An increase of 0.3% compared to 2015. This total equates to an average per capita of 13,672 euro. However, there were large differences in net income across the 42 countries evaluated. With an average of 63,011 euro per capita, Liechtenstein maintained its unchallenged position from last year, with on average a purchasing power that is 4.6 times the European level, as much as 80 times higher than the worst performing country, Ukraine.

English: [http://www.liechtenstein-business.li/en/news-detail/article/liechtensteins-citizens ...](http://www.liechtenstein-business.li/en/news-detail/article/liechtensteins-citizens...)

Lithuania

Collective agreement for education in dead end

November 11, 2016

The collective agreement for the education sector has been negotiated since June 2015 and social partners, education trade unions and the Ministry of Education and Science, put in a lot of effort to find the best solutions for existing problems in the education sector in the form of provisions of the collective agreement. However, in September 2016, when it came to the approval of the agreement by the government, the Prime Minister questioned those parts of the agreement which were considered 'costly' and required some funding, among them increase in teachers' salaries. Social partners stated that the clauses of the agreement could not be unilaterally changed by the government. So, education trade unions claim that a unilaterally change of any provisions would violate the Labour Code. In that case the unions would consider the possibility of initiating a collective dispute.

English: [https://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/1704-lithuania-long-negotiation ...](https://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/1704-lithuania-long-negotiation...)

Luxembourg

Easy visa for the super-rich

November 14, 2016

A law, expected to be passed before the end of 2016, will provide non-EU nationals with a fast-track residence permit if they are rich enough. Bill 6992 will enable people originating from Russia or the Middle East to reside if they deposit 20 million euros in a Luxembourg bank, place 3 million in a shareholding company or invest 500,000 in a commercial or industrial company operating from the Grand Duchy. Critics point out that the country confirms its tax haven status with this measure.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/politics/new-law-luxembourg-to-offer-easy-visa-for-ultra-rich ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/politics/new-law-luxembourg-to-offer-easy-visa-for-ultra-rich...)

Wage indexation still pending

November 10, 2016

The date of the next compulsory wage rise has been pushed back several times and now it appears more will be known after December 7. The country's pricing commission is to meet to review November's inflationary rate and determine whether salaries and pensions should be indexed by 2.5%.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/business/wages-pensions-still-no-indexation-in-luxembourg ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/business/wages-pensions-still-no-indexation-in-luxembourg...)

Malta

The years 2010-2015 in labour market data

November 1, 2016

The National Statistics Office portrays employment data from two distinct perspectives for the years 2010 to 2015, by 'place of work' and by 'place of residence'. Also a sectoral distribution is provided. Thus, users are enabled to observe commuter workers across regions. In 2015, the highest proportion of employed persons were in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food services activities and the public administration and defence; compulsory and social security; education; human health and social work activities (Tables 1 and 2).

English: [https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics ...](https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_02/Regional_Statistics...)

Netherlands

Labour violations at building site US embassy

November 25, 2016

Labour laws were violated in the construction of the new United States embassy in Wassenaar, a newspaper reports. Employees structurally had to work overtime and foreign workers did not have the right papers. The Social Affairs and Employment Inspectorate is investigating the case. People who worked on the embassy

told the newspaper that they worked up to 60 hours a week, including Saturday. Workers who protested were sent away. Trade union FNV's safety hotline also received several complaints about safety at the site. Workers were hired as highly skilled migrants - a system that makes it easier to get work permits for highly qualified foreign personnel - while most of them aren't highly skilled workers.

English: [http://nltimes.nl/2016/11/25/labour-violations-alleged-new-us-embassy-site ...](http://nltimes.nl/2016/11/25/labour-violations-alleged-new-us-embassy-site...)

Sacked bank workers find no job

November 22, 2016

The thousands of financial service sector workers who are losing their jobs in the current wave of cutbacks are finding it hard to get a new job. Over 60% of them end up claiming unemployment benefit for more than a year, compared with 35% of the general working population. Half of unemployed bank workers have a degree, double the rate in the population at large. The figures come from a report by the state run job centre organisation UWV and show bookkeepers and receptionists have just a 10% chance of finding a new job in the financial sector. The report compares the perspectives of workers that became unemployed since the start of the crisis.

English: [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2016/11/sacked-bank-workers-spend ...](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2016/11/sacked-bank-workers-spend...)

The report (in Dutch): [http://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/Images/Kansrijk ...](http://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/Images/Kansrijk...)

Cabin crew KLM wins court case

November 9, 2016

Trade union FNV, acting on behalf of striking cabin crew staff, won a court case that air carrier KLM had brought before court. The company had asked the court to ban further actions as long as mediation of the dispute was going on. Judges also said that it is not mandatory for the trade unions to indicate who will participate in strike actions. For security reasons the trade unions normally inform the company beforehand about strikes. The cabin crew is acting against KLM's plan to reduce the number of crew members on some longer flights.

English: <http://nltimes.nl/2016/11/08/unions-announce-klm-cabin-crew-strikes-schiphol>

Dutch: <https://fd.nl/economie-politiek/1174793/klm-verliest-kort-geding-tegen-fnv>

UK migrants earn high wages

November 2, 2016

The central office for statistics CBS reported that more than 46 thousand UK citizens were living in the Netherlands on 1 January 2016. The majority of these first-generation British are living in the Randstad megalopolis and their wages are high in comparison to other migrants. During the past two decades, more native UK citizens have entered every year than left the country. For the first time since 2001, more than 4 thousand UK natives settled in 2015, i.e. nearly twice as many as those who returned to the UK. The report includes a comparison with other immigrants. It reveals that more often than their counterparts from Germany and Belgium and from the rest of the EU, UK citizens are found in the highest wage groups.

English: <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2016/44/british-subjects-in-the-netherlands-earn-high-wages>

Norway

Collective decision making weakened

November 16, 2016

People's perceived level of influence over their own work situation has plummeted. In seven years the number of people saying they have a lot of influence has fallen from 89% to 77%. Imported leadership models get the blame. The plan is to carry out the collective decision making barometer every year, sometimes supported by independent surveys carried out by the six trade unions which have financed the barometer. The six trade unions represent occupations like medical doctors, researchers, police and oil industry workers. The 2016 survey posed the same questions as the ones used in 2009 for a major survey on the state of the corporate democracy, carried out by the research foundation Fafo. The unions pointed out that the results supported what they had experienced themselves in conversation with their members – that collective decision making is becoming less common. This issue has also been the cause of several labour conflicts in the public sector.

English: [http://www.nordiclourjournal.org/i-fokus/in-focus-2016/collective-decision-making ...](http://www.nordiclourjournal.org/i-fokus/in-focus-2016/collective-decision-making...)

The report (in Norwegian): [https://flt.no/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Medbestemmelses ...](https://flt.no/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Medbestemmelses...)

Agreement on national standard for all train drivers

November 2, 2016

Train drivers returned to work after a four-week strike when the government agreed to joint union and employer demands for a national standard for all train drivers. The government agreed to develop the national standard with the involvement of the unions and the trade organisation. A trade organisation for railway companies will be immediately set up by law, with mandatory membership for all companies with safety certificates on the network. The locomotive drivers' regulations will be made more specific and the employers – Norwegian State Railways (NSB) and CargoNet – have committed not to change the existing training programmes before the new standard is developed. During mediation the NSB had strongly rejected the union's proposal along these lines.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/november/victorious-norwegian ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/november/victorious-norwegian...)

Poland

Labour migration less popular

November 25, 2016

The number of workers declaring an interest in working abroad is the lowest in years. This was the outcome of research carried out by a recruitment agency, dedicated to the economic migration. 12 percent of Poles are thinking about leaving to work abroad, this is the smallest percentage in years. Last year it was 15 percent, and even early this year it was 19 percent. The conclusion is that a good economic situation and improvement on the labour market is bringing results.

English: <http://www.thenews.pl/1/6/Artykul/281658,Are-Poles-losing-interest-in-emigration>

Report (in Polish): [http://www.workservice.pl/Centrum-prasowe/Informacje-prasowe/Ekspert ...](http://www.workservice.pl/Centrum-prasowe/Informacje-prasowe/Ekspert...)

Government provides financial support to coal workers losing jobs

November 21, 2016

The government decided to initiate a coal mine closure process by providing financial support of about €1.8 billion to workers who might lose jobs due to closures. The EU sees these funds not as competition obstacles while requiring that mines receiving 'closure aid' must cease mining activities by the end of 2018. The state aid is meant to cover exceptional costs resulting from activities related to the closures, notably to mitigate social costs such as the costs of social welfare benefits or early retirement, costs incurred in safety or site rehabilitation for the production units subject to closure and must be based on an agreed closure plan.

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

Portugal

Job cuts at bank

November 10, 2016

Banco Popular Portugal announced it was going to close 47 branches and cut its staff by 295 workers by the end of the year as part of the restructuring of the Spanish group. 'We anticipate 295 workers leaving (including retirements), through mutual agreement to terminate work contracts', the bank said in a statement. The bank said it had asked the work and social security minister to declare the bank was being restructured so the workers would have the right to unemployment benefits.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/banco-popular-portugal-to-close-47 ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/banco-popular-portugal-to-close-47...)

Garbage collectors call off strike

November 3, 2016

Garbage collectors in the Algarve city of Portimão called off their planned strike. A source from the union representing the local refuse collectors said the action was scrapped after the city's Water and Waste Company EMARP promised to honour workers' demands of two consecutive days off a week from January

2017. The head of the union said a memorandum of understanding was signed between the union and the company's administration to give workers two consecutive days off, including Sunday, during low season.

English: <http://theportugalsnews.com/news/portimao-binmen-scrap-strike ...>

Metro workers come to a deal

November 3, 2016

Lisbon Metro workers decided in a plenary session to sign the Metro de Lisboa Company Agreement that will regulate their working relationship, bringing an end to five years of negotiations. The Federation of Transport Unions (FECTRANS) announced that the workers voted in the majority for the unions to act as representatives in signing the company agreement with the Board of Directors. The agreement is scheduled to be signed at a next meeting on 9 November. The unions will 'continue to fight' for other rights including wage increases as the workers have not had an increase since 2007, and have had no career progression.

English: <http://www.theportugalsnews.com/news/metro-workers-sign-company-agreement ...>

Romania

Ferrero investigates child labour claims

November 24, 2016

Italian group Ferrero has launched an investigation into allegations that children were making toys for its Kinder chocolate eggs. Ferrero said its code of conduct banned child labour and all suppliers were subject to regular independent inspections. This has occurred after the British newspaper, The Sun, reported that impoverished families in Romania, including small children, were working long hours for little pay to make the toys at home. Ferrero manager in that production area said that 'the factories involved will have their contracts terminated if the allegations are found to be true.' Also, prosecutors said in a statement that they were looking into the report.

English: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-24/makers-of-kinder-surprise-eggs ...>

Retailer increases minimum wage

November 22, 2016

German hypermarket chain Kaufland, the biggest retailer with over 15,000 employees, will increase the minimum gross wage of the employees working in its local stores starting 1 March 2017. A commercial worker at Kaufland will get a gross minimum salary of RON 2,000 (some 443 euro), including food vouchers. The wage of senior employees could go up to RON 3,800 (over 840 euro). Moreover, Kaufland Romania will also increase the annual leave to 22 days, from 21 days, thus giving an extra day off to its employees. Workers in local supermarkets and hypermarkets are paid very low salaries compared to employees working in similar jobs in the same groups in Western Europe.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/german-retailer-kaufland-ups-minimum-wage ...>

Posta Romana deal with unions ends strike

November 2, 2016

The board of Posta Romana and representatives of postal workers' trade union SPLR have upon the salary increase scheme, from 1 January 2017. During the negotiations, the parties have agreed a salary increase and also to increase the value of meal tickets, after the coming into force of the law regarding the increase in the nominal value increase in the meal tickets. The new pay scheme aims to follow the social equality principles, focusing on the employees with the lowest incomes. As a result of the agreement, the work conflict will be stopped and the activity of Posta Romana will take its normal course.

English: <http://www.business-review.eu/news/posta-romana-board-reaches-deal ...>

Serbia

Announced wage increase questioned

November 4, 2016

Despite the fact, as revealed by the IMF and other observers, that economic growth is strengthening and labour market indicators are showing noticeable improvement, the country's Fiscal Council is of the opinion

that the announced increase in salaries and pensions in 2017 could very easily prove premature. The Council made this statement in the context of all the 'unsolved' problems of the country's public finances.

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

Slovakia

Public service wages settled

November 8, 2016

It is planned that the salaries of employees in state and public administration increase by 4% in 2017. This stems from the preliminary agreement made after the third round of negotiations over higher level collective agreements held in October 2016. The ministry of finance is still discussing with the unions the additional increase in the so-called wage base for a part of 2017 by a further 2 percent. This, however, does not concern the salaries of teachers. The negotiations regarding an additional increase for teachers will be discussed directly by representative of the school trade unions and education minister.

English: <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20374908/state-employees-will-earn-more ...>

Slovenia

Doctors work-to-rule after negotiations fail

November 8, 2016

Doctors started striking after failing to reach an agreement with the government on pay and workload standards in negotiations that have lasted for almost a year. The action is not a traditional strike, instead doctors decided to strictly stick to a 40-hour work week. The head of the FIDES trade union at the UKC Ljubljana hospital said there would be no major changes for the patients the first week into the strike. The action was being carried out in 13 community health centres and 11 hospitals, with most of them opting for rescheduling to cope for now. FIDES has been endorsed in the strike activities by Praktikum, a union representing general practitioners, though it is not entirely clear whether Praktikum members are also on strike. Doctors have been demanding new workload standards and a pay rise in the average salary.

English: <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/slovenian-doctors-on-strike-activities-to-be-stepped-up>

Report on active labour market policy

November 1, 2016

The OECD is preparing a series of country reports, *Connecting People with Jobs*, which provides an assessment activation policies to encourage greater labour market participation. This country report (the second in the series) focuses on four groups: long-term unemployed, low-skilled workers, older workers and displaced workers. The global financial crisis has hit hard and resulted in a high level of long-term unemployment, low rates of employment for some groups such as those who are older or low-skilled and poor reemployment chances for workers who have been made redundant. The report includes a section with a polemic on the effects and impact of the minimum wage on the structure of earnings.

English: <http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/employment ...>

Spain

Union confederations plan mass demonstrations

November 25, 2016

The main trade union confederations CC OO and UGT have announced a call for mobilisations throughout the country for 15 December 2016 and a large trade union demonstration on 18 December 2016 in Madrid. They aim to encourage the process on social dialogue to address the problems of unemployment, in-work poverty and pensions. For the unions it is crucial that the government and the employers' associations will agree on an increase of the statutory minimum wage for next year and the adoption a minimum subsistence

income. Besides, they also want measures to prevent employment precariousness and abusive practices at the workplace, especially by multi-services undertakings.

Spanish: [http://www.abc.es/economia/abci-sindicatos-anuncian-movilizaciones ...](http://www.abc.es/economia/abci-sindicatos-anuncian-movilizaciones...)

Overview of mass demonstrations since the start of the crisis (in Spanish):

[http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2016/11/25/actualidad ...](http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2016/11/25/actualidad...)

Wage increases discussed

November 24, 2016

The minority government is confronted with a bill put forward by the Unidos Podemos to raise the minimum wage. Although the ruling Popular Party (PP) opposes raising the minimum monthly salary from €655.20 to €800 on January 1, 2018, there is no legal way to stop it, given that the prime minister is heading a minority government with no power to impose its views in a fragmented parliament. The government has planned to meet with trade unions and employers to discuss the matter. The two major trade unions, CC OO and UGT, have been repeatedly demanding a quick hike to €800, followed by a more gradual raise to €1,000 (spread out over 14 monthly payments). The trade unions have also formulated their demands for the coming bargaining season. CC OO and UGT formulated a demand of wage increases within a range of 1.8 to 3%. The Central Independent and Public Employees Trade Union (CSIF) requests, among other things, that public servants and employees will recover the part of their salaries that the former government lowered down.

English: [http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/11/24/inenglish ...](http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/11/24/inenglish...)

Spanish: [http://economia.elpais.com/economia ...](http://economia.elpais.com/economia...)

[http://www.elmundo.es/economia ...](http://www.elmundo.es/economia...)

Agreement on private healthcare sector in Catalonia

November 23, 2016

Trade union UGT, after many months of negotiation, has signed the IX Collective Agreement on private health sector of Catalonia (2016 to 2017). The agreement affects some 12,000 workers throughout Catalonia. It includes a 2.5% increase of the salary, with retroactivity since August 2016. As of 1 January 2018, pay tables will already have a 0.5% increase. This 3% total raise will be the starting point for the negotiation of the next collective agreement. Another important aspect of the agreement is the implementation of a flexible and comprehensive permit (an annual day) for all shifts.

Spanish: [http://ugt.es/SitePages/NoticiaDetalle ...](http://ugt.es/SitePages/NoticiaDetalle...)

Wages fell during the crisis

November 18, 2016

Salaries have suffered more from the crisis than what wages statistics showed so far. The Income Inequality Update by OECD shows that between 2010 and 2014, workers with the lowest salaries suffered the greatest wage cuts of all OECD member states after Portugal. According to the Labour Price Index that is published by the National Institute of Statistics (INE), workers' wages fell by 0.7% between 2008 and 2014. Between 2009 and 2010, the annual rate registered positive values (1.5% and 0.5%, respectively), to decline between 2011 and 2013, until 2014, when they recovered again (0.8%). The labour price index shows that between 2008 and 2014 wages have actually declined 0.7%; in the same period, prices increased with 8.5%. This implies a 9.2% loss of purchasing power.

Spanish: [http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2016/11/18/actualidad ...](http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2016/11/18/actualidad...)

[http://www.ine.es/prensa ...](http://www.ine.es/prensa...)

[http://www.abc.es/economia/abci-salarios-espanoles-redujeron-07-por-ciento ...](http://www.abc.es/economia/abci-salarios-espanoles-redujeron-07-por-ciento...)

Sweden

Legislation to protect whistle-blowers

November 16, 2016

A draft law, to be introduced in January 2017, will improve the protection of whistle-blowers, strengthening the employees' situation. The 'Act on special protection against victimisation of workers who are sounding the alarm about serious wrongdoings' protects any employee, whether he or she works in the private or public sector, when the worker tells the media or the authorities about corruption cases or other serious issues. The worker will then be protected against reprisals like withheld wages, lessened career opportunities or – in the case of temporary workers – reduced chances of having their contract renewed. The idea is that the employee should approach the employer first, and if the employer does not act, the case can be taken to

the media or the authorities. The chief legal advisor at the trade union confederation of professional employees (TCO) hopes that the new legislation will make difference in real life.

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

Dockers on strike at largest Scandinavian port

November 15, 2016

Dockers launched a strike in Gothenburg, Scandinavia's largest port, demanding better wages and working conditions. The dock workers' union announced on Facebook that no agreement had been reached with the management and added that the strike began at 2pm on that date. According to the employers' organisation, around half of all container traffic in Sweden passes through the Gothenburg port, operated by APM Terminals (Maersk Group). Only one third of the container traffic operated during the strike.

English: <http://www.thelocal.se/20161115/swedish-dockers-strike-in-scandinavias-largest-port>
<http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/swedish-dockers-strike-in-scandinavias-largest-port/>

Switzerland

More wage checks for foreign workers

November 24, 2016

The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs has decided to increase the number of spot checks from 27.000 to 35.000 per year, falling short of the 50.000 demanded by trade unions. These checks aim to prevent that the wages of overseas employees undercut those of the domestic workforce. The trade unions fear that cheaper workers will drive down wages for Swiss workers, especially in the construction and hospitality sectors.

English: [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/level-playing-field_more-wage-checks ...](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/level-playing-field_more-wage-checks...)

Quota system of seasonal workers was inhuman

November 9, 2016

The trade union confederation SGB/USS published a brochure that examines the quota system for foreign seasonal workers, used by the country after the introduction in 1934. The extreme working conditions are illustrated by portraits of former seasonal workers. Precarious conditions, undeclared labour and downward pressure on pay build a tragic reality. The authors conclude also that, from the economical point of view, the system has not delivered as many workers stayed in the informal sector. Poor integration and a permanent rotation, because of the temporary stay in the country, hampered the workplace continuity and innovation.

French: [http://www.uss.ch/themes/politique-syndicale/article/details/anciens-contingents ...](http://www.uss.ch/themes/politique-syndicale/article/details/anciens-contingents...)

The report (in French and German):

[http://www.uss.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Schwarzbuch_Kontingentsystem_franz ...](http://www.uss.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Schwarzbuch_Kontingentsystem_franz...)

[http://www.sgb.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Schwarzbuch_Kontingentsystem_A5_deutsch ...](http://www.sgb.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Schwarzbuch_Kontingentsystem_A5_deutsch...)

Turkey

Dismissals for workers who want to unionise

November 16, 2016

Trade union Birleşik Metal İş has members at several Schneider factories in Turkey. After organising members at Günsan Elektrik plant, owned by Schneider Electric, the union applied to the ministry of labour for what is called a Majority Certificate in order to form a workplace union. Management's response when they found out was to unceremoniously sack seven of the workers leading the organising efforts. The anti-union practices are continuing, with management having one-on-one conversations with workers whether they have joined a union or not.

English: [http://www.industriall-union.org/turkey-fired-for-wanting-to-form-a-union ...](http://www.industriall-union.org/turkey-fired-for-wanting-to-form-a-union...)

Strike at İzmir's main suburban rail company

November 8, 2016

More than 300 workers from İZBAN, a commuter rail system connecting the western province of İzmir's suburban area to the metropolitan area, went on strike on 8 November 2016 due to disputes in collective bargaining negotiations with their employers. İZBAN, owned jointly by the Turkish State Railways (TCDD) and İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, is the country's largest commuter railway. İZBAN workers from the Demiryol-İş Union decided to walk out, as they could not reach a collective agreement. Representatives from the trade union said workers at İzmir Metro A.Ş., another leading rail line in İzmir, are paid 33% more than them. Company representatives claimed the union had refused all their offers, which included a wage rise.

English: [http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/workers-go-on-strike-at-izmirs-main-suburban ...](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/workers-go-on-strike-at-izmirs-main-suburban...)

United Kingdom

Protest before Crossrail HQ

November 25, 2016

More than 100 construction workers staged a morning demonstration outside Crossrail's Canary Wharf headquarters. The protest was as a result of pay dispute between the parties. Organisers are calling for 'meaningful negotiations' with Crossrail in a bid to end the industrial row. The demonstrators came from the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) and Unite trade unions. A Unite officer for Crossrail said that it was a demonstration because the company refused to talk to the unions in regards to a second tier payment.

English: [http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/construction-workers-descend-canary-wharf ...](http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/construction-workers-descend-canary-wharf...)

Retailer awards higher hourly minimum wage

November 25, 2016

Retailer Lidl will pay its Northern Ireland workers a higher voluntary minimum wage of at least £8.45 an hour. The chain, which employs around 800 staff across 38 stores here, will introduce the increase in March 2017 across the UK. The move will benefit around a fifth of its workforce who currently earn an hourly minimum of £8.25. The £8.45 is a voluntary minimum hourly wage, higher than the Government's own so-called 'living wage'.

English: [http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/northern-ireland-lidl-supermarket ...](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/northern-ireland-lidl-supermarket...)

Series on the increasingly precarious world of work

November 16, 2016

In the first of an ongoing series, *The new world of work*, on the increasingly precarious world of work, the Guardian uncovers the use of 'contrived' financial arrangements to slash national insurance bills. An analysis of official figures reveals that more than one in five workers, some 7.1 million people, could lose their jobs at short or no notice. Half of the biggest group – the self-employed – are in low pay and take home less than two-thirds of the median earnings. Two million self-employed people earn below £8 per hour. Another contribution reveals how university teaching, is dominated by zero-hours contracts, temp agencies and other forms of precarious work. Lecturers are increasingly on non-permanent or hourly paid contracts. Another contribution shows that the number of care workers on zero-hours contracts has jumped to one in seven.

English: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/series/the-new-world-of-work>

Critical report from governmental advisory body

November 16, 2016

The Social Mobility Commission's State of the Nation 2016 report warns that the country has a deep social mobility problem which is getting worse for an entire generation of young people. The impact is not just felt by the poorest in society but is also holding back whole tranches of middle- as well as low-income families. The problem is not just social division, but a widening divide between the big cities - London especially - and too many towns and counties that are being left behind economically and hollowed out socially. The report reveals that millions of workers have experienced a 5 percent real terms average fall in wages since 2008 and young workers have seen a 15 percent decline in hourly pay. When rising housing costs are taken into account, the picture looks even worse. The commission recommends the government e.g. to focus on moving people from low pay to living pay and to introduce a legal ban on unpaid internships.

English: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/state-of-the-nation-report-on-social-mobility ...](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/state-of-the-nation-report-on-social-mobility...)

The report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads ...>

Prison officers end protest after court order

November 15, 2016

Prison officers have returned to work after a High Court injunction ordered them to end a 24-hour protest. Up to 10,000 prison officers in England and Wales stopped work over claims of a 'surge in violence' in jails. It is illegal for officers to strike, but the POA had directed its members to stop working after talks with the government over health and safety concerns broke down. The Prison Officers Association said it had achieved its aim of securing a meeting with Justice Secretary Liz Truss.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk ...>

Amazon workers receive less than the minimum wage

November 11, 2016

A BBC reporter got a job with AHC services, one of many agencies which supplies drivers to the firm's delivery wing Amazon Logistics in the south of England, and which the BBC had heard a lot of complaints about. He reports that Amazon delivery drivers regularly work 'illegal' hours and receive less than the minimum wage. Drivers for agencies contracted by the internet giant told they were expected to deliver up to 200 parcels a day. Some admitted breaking speed limits to stay on schedule, while others said time was not allowed for toilet breaks.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england ...>

Deliveroo workers seek union membership

November 8, 2016

A group of food takeaway couriers working for Deliveroo are taking legal steps to gain union recognition and workers' rights. It comes after two drivers for Uber, the company behind a taxi-hailing app, won a case at a London employment tribunal which gave them the right to be classed as workers rather than self-employed independent contractors. The case has led to a political debate on a wage floor for people who work 'on demand' for companies in the gig economy. If the couriers win, it could encourage thousands of those working in the so-called gig economy to seek to unionise and receive rights such as paid leave.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk ...>

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/nov/01/ed-vaizey-minimum-wage-gig ...>

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