

collective bargaining

Issue 6/2017 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
UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



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European sources

Inequality in Europe

June 23, 2017

The website Social Europe has paid attention to inequality in Europe. In an inequality report of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the authors illustrate their work with tables and data. Income inequality in the European Union has barely changed for a number of years. Neither improvements like those before 2009 nor a substantial worsening have been observed. However, this applies only to relative inequality, which indicates the income of richer people, regions and countries as a multiple of that of poorer ones. If one looks at the

absolute differences between the highest and the lowest incomes, however, an alarming increase in inequality is to be observed in Europe. In the fifth episode of *Social Europe Talk* from the European Parliament in Brussels the panellists discuss inequality in Europe.

English: [http://library.fes.de/pdf-files ...](http://library.fes.de/pdf-files...)

Social talk: [https://www.socialeurope.eu/2017/06/inequality-europe ...](https://www.socialeurope.eu/2017/06/inequality-europe...)

Joint declaration on VET

June 22, 2017

The European social partners of the Metal, Engineering and Technology-based (MET) industries formulated a joint statement that calls for swift, ambitious action to be taken in the field of vocational education and training in order to guarantee VET becomes a First-Class option. Prompt action should also be taken to address the lack of digital skills in Europe, to ensure the continued competitiveness of the MET sector and the sustainability of its jobs at a time of fast-paced transformation.

English: [http://www.ceemet.org/sites/default/files/ceemet_industriall ...](http://www.ceemet.org/sites/default/files/ceemet_industriall...)

OECD Employment Outlook 2017

June 13, 2017

The OECD published its annual report on jobs and employment. Each edition reviews recent trends, policy developments, and prospects. A statistical annex provides data on unemployment rates, incidence of part-time employment, employment/population ratios, and activity rates. Included are data on expenditure on labour market programmes, average annual wages, and earnings dispersion. The chapter (4) that is dedicated to collective bargaining assesses the degree of centralisation, the articulation between different bargaining levels and the use of derogations and opt-out clauses. Collective bargaining still has an important role, although the share of workers whose terms of employment are set through collective bargaining fell during the past three decades. A summary is available in English, French and Spanish.

English: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/oecd-employment-outlook ...](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/oecd-employment-outlook...)

[http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/employment ...](http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/employment...)

Summary: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download ...](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download...)

Website provides wage information in 24 languages

June 9, 2017

The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers has launched a website that provides information in 24 languages. The website provides concise information on wages, working conditions and rights of construction workers for all the European Countries in all the European languages. Workers can find useful links and contacts of trade unions representatives ready to help and support them in case of need.

The site: <https://www.constructionworkers.eu/en/be>

Wage distribution and occupations

June 8, 2017

Eurofound's European Jobs Monitor 2017 is dedicated to employment shifts and wage distribution. The monitor discusses the role that occupations play in structuring European wage inequality, and to what extent the observed patterns of job polarisation and upgrading have contributed to wage inequality trends in the last decade. One of the conclusions is that changes in the distribution of wages within occupations were much more consequential for overall wage inequality trends than changes in the wages paid by the different occupations or changes in the occupational structure.

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

Austria

Hefty debate on working time

June 15, 2017

The government asked the social partners to come to an agreement before 30 June 2017 on a 1500-euro

minimum wage and the flexibilization of the working time. The introduction of a mandatory minimum wage at the level of 1500 euro, beginning with the year 2020, was agreed. The idea is to realise this in collective bargaining. Further flexibilization, however, could not be concluded. The employers came with a demand to create a general application of a 12 hours working day. For the workers' side, this proposal is unacceptable. There can be situations where a long working day is applied, but this has to be compensated by additional holidays or working time reduction.

German: <http://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/oesterreich/politik ...>

Joint action by social partners in construction

June 18, 2017

The social partners in construction made a joint effort to lobby in Brussels against wage dumping. Trade union GBH and the employers' organisation had several talks with representatives from EU institutions. The partners informed the EU representatives about a research outcome, titled 'Wage and social dumping in construction', prepared by the Graz University. This study reveals that workers from neighbouring countries can work 30% cheaper, because of the circumvention of social security and other mandatory payments.

German: <http://www.oegb-eu.at/servlet ...>

The report (summary in German): <http://www.oegb-eu.at/servlet/Blob ...>

Belgium

Regional transport on strike

June 30, 2017

Bus drivers of the regional transport company 'De Lijn' continue with their strike. The strike started with the aim to put more pressure on ongoing negotiations for a collective agreement. The trade unions have asked for a 1.1% wage increase; however, the management asks for several compensation measures that work out negative for the workers.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News ...>

French: https://www.rtf.be/info/economie/detail_le-reseau-de-de-lijn-toujours ...

Dutch: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws/binnenland ...>

Strike at Segal

June 26, 2017

A strike picket line has been organised at the Segal factory in Flémalle. Segal is a sister manufacturer to Eurogal, the galvanising line of Arcelor Mittal, owned by Tata Steel. Workers at the company, which produces some 600,000 tonnes of galvanised steel annually are demanding a wage increase. This follows a reorganisation of the work structure as a result of an investment of twenty million euros, to increase the production line by 30,000 tonnes. Trade unions said that discussions were scheduled to resume with the management to finding a solution which both parties agree on.

English: <http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/8576/flemalle-segal-staff-on-strike>

Social dumping at Brussels Airlines?

June 23, 2017

Trade union BBTK says that Brussels Airlines is outsourcing a series of flights, leading to non-compliance with social regulations. Brussels Airlines is collaborating with the Irish company CityJet for some flights. This company sub-contracts the cabin staff management function to the company Nobox. According to BBTK, workers are not entering into contracts meeting Belgian legislation and Nobox is not respecting the minimum wage either. The unions are calling for dialogue and threatening strike action.

English: <http://www.brusselstimes.com/brussels/8569/brussels-airlines-accused ...>

More direct labour at DHL

June 14, 2017

The works council at DHL Aviation announced that the delivery company will engage more people directly. In June, 50 workers have received a permanent contract and the plan is to change the contract of another 75

temporary workers in July into permanent contracts. Earlier on, an undercover-reportage had discovered that workers often worked several months as day labourers, a type of employment that is only permitted for certain short-term work. The European Works Council at DHL plans to monitor the employment practices more closely.

French: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.francais ...>

German: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.deutsch/Wirtschaft ...>

Dutch (including the Reportage): <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws/economie ...>

Bulgaria

Public sector pay on the agenda

June 19, 2017

After a settlement in principle was concluded, different interpretations of the way forward made it necessary to enter into fresh talks. After an extraordinary meeting of the Social Partnership Council, trade unions and the management of the Ministry concluded that salaries in the Ministry of Interior should increase in 2017. The trade unions that demand increases between 15 to 20% said that while there is a normal dialogue, there will be no protests. On the other hand, unions have clearly take a stand against too low wages.

English: <http://www.novinite.com/articles/180761/Interior+Ministry+Management ...>

<http://www.novinite.com/articles/180804/Trade+Union+in+Interior+Ministry ...>

Croatia

Low income and social assistance

June 16, 2017

A Flash Report prepared by the European Social Policy Network (ESPN) provides information on recent social policy developments. The study points to the extreme financial and related difficulties faced by parents with school-aged children who are in receipt of social assistance. The study also contains policy recommendations. Part of the research was an analysis of the coping strategies of poor households in which at least one child was of a school age. A survey of 207 households, recipients of Guaranteed Minimum Income Support, reveals that these households live almost exclusively on state support (Minimum Income and child benefits) but their overall disposable income covers just over half of their basic needs.

English: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet ...>

Cyprus

Workers on strike at desalination plant

June 6, 2017

Workers at the Episkopi desalination plant in Limassol will continue their indefinitely strike until their employer honours what had been agreed in 2016. The strike began on 30 May 2017 after negotiations between the workers' unions – PEO and SEK – and the company operating the desalination plant on employment terms fell through. Some 20 workers at the Episkopi desalination plant had also gone on strike last year after they had said that their employer, Limassol Water Co Ltd, refused to grant them a collective agreement to safeguard their rights. The strike, that lasted a week, ended after an agreement was achieved with mediation by the labour ministry. But the unions said that the company has not honour that agreement.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/06/06/workers-strike-desalination-plant/>

Czech Republic

Pay deal at Globus

June 28, 2017

The (German owned) retail chain Globus will raise wages paid to all its employees in hypermarkets by an average of CZK 1,000 (38 euro) beginning 1 July 2017. The growth will apply also to benefits, such as the 13th wage or meal vouchers. The chain employs 4,900 people in hypermarkets.

English: [http://praguemonitor.com/2017/06/28/globus-will-raise ...](http://praguemonitor.com/2017/06/28/globus-will-raise-...)

Wages in social services go up

June 1, 2017

The government approved a directive that will lead to an improvement of the wages of social and education workers. The salaries of social workers will rise by 23 percent as from July 2017, and those of culture employees and the non-teaching staff in the sphere of education by 9.4 percent. The trade union movement have demanded this already over a longer period of time. The poor wages resulted in restricted social services as thousands of people to look after seniors and the disabled were lacking.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2017/06/01/salaries-social-services-rise-23-july>

Denmark

Labour market frictions investigated

June 30, 2017

According to a survey conducted by the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) more than every third company - 36 per cent - has unsuccessfully tried to recruit new employees in 2016. The employers' organisation organised a survey among 3,335 companies. In May 2017, the centre-right government had promised to cut taxes for high and low-income earners, as well as companies, simplify rules and improve the country's infrastructure as part of a major drive designed to combat a lack of labour supply. However, the opposition and the trade unions take a very critical stand towards this policy. In a period of more competition to find skilled labour investment in people and improved wages must be the answer.

English: [https://www.thelocal.dk/jobs/article/danish-companies-struggling ...](https://www.thelocal.dk/jobs/article/danish-companies-struggling-...)

Union uncovers social dumping

June 29, 2017

Trade union 3F has created a special webpage that tackles social dumping practices. The union journal reports about one of the last case that are listed on this webpage. The industrial company Fipros A / S, which supplies ingredients for the food working industry, has been sentenced on 28 June in the Labour Court to a 1.8 million Danish Kroner (025 million euro) fine for the underpayment of Hungarian workers.

The webpage against social dumping: <https://tema.3f.dk/stop-social-dumping>

The report (Danish): [https://www.fagbladet3f.dk/artikel/millionbod-til ...](https://www.fagbladet3f.dk/artikel/millionbod-til-...)

Estonia

Eesti Energia signs collective agreements

June 20, 2017

In the mining company Enefit Kaevandused, an agreement was reached between the management, the miners' and energy workers' independent trade union and the Narva Energy Trade Union (NETU). In another Eesti Energia subsidiary, Enefit Energiatootmise AS, NETU also signed an agreement. The collective agreement of Enefit Kaevandused is to last until 30 June 2018. Wages will be increased with 5%. Benefits will remain unchanged for the most part, however there will be slightly fewer additional days off. The collective agreement signed by Enefit Energiatootmise AS and the NETU is to expire on 31 December 2018. In this agreement, all existing benefits will remain in place and the basic wage of trade union members will increase 4% on average in addition to the increase already given at the beginning of 2017. At the start, the miners' and energy workers' independent trade union asked for a 7% wage increase. NETU managed to retain all existing benefits.

English: [http://news.err.ee/603106/eesti-energia-signs-collective-agreements ...](http://news.err.ee/603106/eesti-energia-signs-collective-agreements-...)

Finland

Huge wage differences on shipyards

June 28, 2017

Turku shipyard, which is owned by the German firm Meyer, has a two-tier labour market, according to reports from regional authorities. The reports detail how some subcontracted workers at Meyer's Turku yard are paid less than the minimum wages outlined in collective agreements, their hours are not properly recorded, and there are shortcomings in arrangements for occupational health care, overtime payments and time off in lieu of overtime.

English: [https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/reports_reveal_turku_shipyards_two-tier ...](https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/reports_reveal_turku_shipyards_two-tier...)

Work stoppage suspended

June 21, 2017

Shop stewards at state-owned oil company Neste have called off a planned work stoppage to protest government plans to reduce its stake in the firm. The industrial action would have suspended deliveries of fuel for a week. The decision to cancel the demonstration was made after worker representatives met with company officials. At present the state owns some 50.1% of the firm's stock via the Solidium holding company. Unions were protesting against legislative changes that would allow the state to bring down the stake in Neste to 33.4%.

English: [https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/work_stoppage_called_off ...](https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/work_stoppage_called_off...)

Trade unions are seeking pay increase

June 15, 2017

In March, the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK terminated all national agreements with the trade union confederations and stated that it was no longer willing to make any further national level labour market agreements. Therefore, the time of centralised nation level labour market agreements is over. The existing collective agreements start to expire after summer. Unions are preparing to set out their goals for the negotiations. As pay increases seem possible after years of stagnation, many have made it clear that pay rises are necessary during the upcoming collective bargaining round and wage decisions must roll back the adverse effects that the competitiveness pact imposed on workers.

English: [http://heikkijokinen.info/trade-union-news-from-finland/1267-unions-demand ...](http://heikkijokinen.info/trade-union-news-from-finland/1267-unions-demand...)

France

Actions of domestic workers

June 17, 2017

The collective agreement for employees of an individual employer (formerly known as domestic employees) dates back to 1999 and covers approximately 1.3 million employees, most of whom are part-time workers. There are around 320,000 maternal assistants for which the CFDT signed a national collective agreement ten years ago. Despite this collective agreement, employers often violate the labour code by imposing long work hours on and breaching contracts with maternal employees. The CFDT has been actively working in national negotiations to ensure that these maternal assistants are recognised and treated like all other employees. An activist for the defence of domestic workers' rights presented her experiences in a book.

English: [https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/dws/zita-cabais-obra ...](https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/dws/zita-cabais-obra...)

Industrial action at France 24

June 16, 2017

Workers at the TV channel France 24 stopped work on 16 June 2017 in a dispute over 'unhealthy' shift hours. Journalists and technicians at the TV network France 24 staged a walkout, accusing their employers of not respecting a deal on working conditions. More than 120 staff at the news channel stopped work and picketed its headquarters in protest at what they claimed was the company's refusal to implement a 2015 agreement addressing 'unsocial and unhealthy' hours.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/15/france-24-staff-strike ...](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/15/france-24-staff-strike...)

Alternative labour code summarised

June 1, 2017

An alternative proposal for a complete revision of the French Labour Code that was published in March 2017 by a group of legal experts known as the Research Group for a Different Labour Code (GR-PACT) is now summarised in English. The proposal aims to make the law leaner and more accessible, but also to adapt it to today's challenges and to preserve and strengthen certain important historical achievements. The starting point is to provide a readily understandable labour law, in the belief that 'an incomprehensible law should be considered as non-acceptable in today's democratic society'.

English: [http://englishbulletin.adapt.it/wp-content/uploads/2017 ...](http://englishbulletin.adapt.it/wp-content/uploads/2017...)

Germany

Earnings and working time data

June 30, 2017

The statistical office Destatis reported that nominal earnings in May 2017 had increased by 2.6% when compared to 2016. Employment reached a record high level, with 44.1 million workers. Compared with May 2016, the number of persons in employment increased by 651,000 or 1.5%. The Institute for Labour Market and Professional Research (IAB) published data, which give evidence that the workforce worked a total of 15.3 billion hours in the first quarter of 2017, an increase of 3.2% compared to the same period last year. The data from IAB also show that the number of full-time employees grew by 1.4 % in Q1 2017 compared to 2016.

English: [https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices ...](https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices...)

[https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices ...](https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices...)

Destatis report (German): [https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService ...](https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService...)

IAB-data (German, with statistics): [http://www.iab.de/de/informationsservice/presse ...](http://www.iab.de/de/informationsservice/presse...)

Works council bans overtime at Mercedes-Benz

June 29, 2017

Following difficult negotiations with the management over the future of the Untertürkheim site, the Works Council at this major supplying site of Mercedes-Benz will not allow any overtime as of 1 July 2017. So far, the plant management insists that the planned battery factory should not be a subdivision of the Untertürkheim site, but instead should be located at Deutsche Accumotive GmbH. Accumotive GmbH is a subsidiary company of Daimler AG based in Kamenz (Saxony). This represents a serious threat to some 19,000 workers at Untertürkheim currently producing combustion engines, transmissions and axles for cars.

English: [http://www.industriall-union.org/workers-at-daimler-in-germany-fight ...](http://www.industriall-union.org/workers-at-daimler-in-germany-fight...)

Wage policy and trade

June 10, 2017

A report of the Hans Böckler Foundation analyses the link between wage policy and trade. According to the authors, a macroeconomically-oriented wage policy would have fuelled stronger domestic growth, as well as having a significant positive impact on income distribution (i.e. a higher wage share). It would also have strengthened the public finances, thereby increasing the leeway for the government to introduce fiscal stimuli. The report includes a link to a statement of Gustav Horn, one of the authors.

English: [https://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p_imk_report ...](https://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p_imk_report...)

Greece

Municipal workers strike ended

June 30, 2017

The public-sector unions decided to suspend an ongoing strike that had led to garbage piling up in the streets, partly because of the heatwave. Union officials said they would explore other forms of labour action in the coming days. Earlier on, the local authority workers' union, POE-OTA, had announced a 24-hour

strike after what it described as a fruitless meeting with the Interior Minister. The workers demand that no contract cleaners should be dismissed after their contracts expire. According to unionists, the minister reneged on his promise to workers that they will keep their jobs. POE-OTA has put pressure onto the government to give permanent jobs to thousands of short-term workers in spite of a Court of Auditors ruling that banned the extension of fixed term contracts (see also the May-CBN).

English: [http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/greek-garbos-suspend-strike ...](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/greek-garbos-suspend-strike...)
[http://www.ekathimerini.com/219427/article/ekathimerini/news/athens-municipal-workers ...](http://www.ekathimerini.com/219427/article/ekathimerini/news/athens-municipal-workers...)

New jobs are temporary and underpaid

June 14, 2017

Official data show that 924,321 jobs were created in the January-May 2017 period, of which 459,888 are full-time and 464,433 positions are part-time. However, one half of the new jobs in the private sector are not only part-time, but also paid below the minimum wage. The figures look promising regarding the number of recruitments, but the wages are low and in most cases the jobs are on flexible, rotating schedules. In most full-time jobs, employees work for more than 10 hours per day with no overtime pay.

English: [http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/06/14/half-of-new-greek-jobs ...](http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/06/14/half-of-new-greek-jobs...)

Hungary

Active labour market policy needs to be reformed

June 26, 2017

In an ESPN Flash report the policy to develop the public works scheme that has been significantly extended since 2010 into the most important employment programme is criticised. The massive extension of public works has taken place at the expense of other, more efficient active labour market policies (ALMPs) such as training and mentoring. The scheme has been criticised for its low efficiency in reintegrating people into the primary labour market, its poor targeting (involving not only those in the most disadvantaged positions, from disadvantaged regions), and for the fact that it absorbs funds from other more efficient labour market tools and provides a lower income than the minimum wage.

English: [https://www.google.de/url ..](https://www.google.de/url..)

One in seven employees victim of legal abuse

June 12, 2017

Nearly one in seven employees is the victim of legal abuse of one kind or another at the hands of their employer, according to a study issued by the Ministry for National Economy's Department of Employment Supervision. The most common abuses affect working hours, rest period and extraordinary work. The number of illegally employed workers, which stood at 6.8 percent five years ago, increased to 10.3 percent in 2016 and is currently at 10.7 percent, a five-year increase of 57 percent. The number of employees being paid under the table for agricultural companies tripled since last year and now stands at 16 percent. The construction industry continues to have the highest rate of illegal workers. The lighter sanctions issued after the economic crisis in order to support SMEs do not prevent companies from violating their employees' rights. Most employers know that even after a serious offense, they can avoid paying a fine.

English: [http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/ministry-says-60-percent-more ...](http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/ministry-says-60-percent-more...)

Iceland

Negotiating in the shadow of lay-offs

June 26, 2017

The head of the Icelandic Airline Pilots' Association states that Icelandair's decision to lay off 115 pilots this fall does not bode well for wage negotiations. The pilots' contracts will expire in September. Icelandair has laid off at least 115 pilots and had also notified 70 captains that they would be demoted to pilots next winter, due to seasonal fluctuations in demand. Around 520 pilots work for Icelandair. Competing domestic airline carrier WOW Air, has expressed a willingness to hire the pilots who recently received letters of termination from Icelandair. The Pilots' Association lamented Icelandair's poor human resources policy and claimed that the move is all about saving money. It will certainly not positively influence the bargaining talks.

English: <http://icelandreview.com/news/2017/06/26/icelandair-laying-115-pilots>

Ireland

Crane strike threat looms as operators demand better pay

June 19, 2017

Crane operators have served notice of strike action in pursuit of pay rises worth up to 15%. Trade union Unite, which represents over 90% of the crane operators, is planning a series of strikes in the next few weeks. The claim for a pay rise comes as the construction industry has rebounded in the last few years after collapsing when the property bubble burst. The union said construction growth has hit a 15-month high and activity in the sector has risen in each of the last 45 months. Unite said around 77% of its members turned out to ballot, with over 90% voting for industrial action.

English: [http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/crane-strike-threat-looms ...](http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/crane-strike-threat-looms...)

Report examines income needs

June 15, 2017

The 2017 Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL) report, from the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice, looks at the adequacy of welfare and minimum-wage incomes for 12 different household types, including families with one to four children, single adults and couples under 66, and single and couple pensioners, in both urban and rural locations. It calculates income needs, as opposed to wants, for such basics as healthy food, clothing and heating. The main conclusions are that while households dependent on social welfare have seen an improvement in their income adequacy, welfare still does not provide a minimum essential income for the majority of households dependent on it.

English (reports and presentations): [https://www.budgeting.ie/publications/mesl-2017 ...](https://www.budgeting.ie/publications/mesl-2017...)

Italy

Crisis had huge impact on labour population

June 22, 2017

Due to the economic crisis, more than half a million people left the country in the years 2008-2016 in search of labour. Top destination was Germany, followed by Great Britain and France. There was also a substantial internal migration, with some 383,000 people leaving the southern regions and moving to the northern and centre regions. The decrease in the total number of inhabitants continued in 2016: the overall balance showed an important drop (-76,106 citizens).

English: [http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/249475/half-million-left-italy ...](http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/249475/half-million-left-italy...)
[https://www.istat.it/en/files/2017/06/EN_National_demographic_balance2016 ...](https://www.istat.it/en/files/2017/06/EN_National_demographic_balance2016...)

Transport strike

June 16, 2017

A call for strike of some of the transport trade unions affected flights, trains, buses and metro services. The strike caused serious disruptions. The unions wanted to protest against further privatisation and liberalisation of the transport sector. Other demands were the renewal of the collective agreements with real pay increases and reduction of working time.

English: [http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/248832/strikes-plunge-italy ...](http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/248832/strikes-plunge-italy...)
[http://www.euronews.com/2017/06/16/transport-strike-brings-black-friday ...](http://www.euronews.com/2017/06/16/transport-strike-brings-black-friday...)
<http://www.thelocal.it/20170615/italy-gears-up-for-a-day-of-transport-strikes>

Wages and inequality

June 14, 2017

The statistical office ISTAT published employment and wage data. Istat also published its annual report 2017 on low-income and inequality. The reports reveal that almost half a million of the 3.5 million civil servants work in precarious forms of labour. Some 300,000 workers are engaged in temporary contracts and another

200,000 workers in freelance contracts with no or little job security. The working conditions in the public sector have not been renewed for eight years. The responsible ministry announced that talks will start soon.

English: [http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/248567/civil-service-contract-talks ...](http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/248567/civil-service-contract-talks...)

ISTAT reports: [http://www.istat.it/en/files/2017/06/EN_Income_redistribution_2016 ...](http://www.istat.it/en/files/2017/06/EN_Income_redistribution_2016...)

https://www.istat.it/en/files/2017/06/Annual_report_-2017_summary.pdf

Latvia

Employers and workers contribute to health reform

June 15, 2017

The ruling coalition partners reached an agreement on raising mandatory social insurance contributions. The contributions will be raised in order to increase the financing of the health care sector. It is planned that the social insurance contributions will be raised by 1 percentage age point – 0.5 % for contributions paid by employers, and 0.5 for employees. A special payment might be set for those people who do not pay social tax.

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

Practitioners will strike over pay

June 12, 2017

The association of general practitioners, or family physicians as they are called in the country, has called an indefinite strike starting 3 July after the Health Ministry rejected a proposal to set up a reconciliation panel. The Association of Family Physicians said that the decision to strike was taken already in May but that before announcing the action the association offered the Health Ministry to form the reconciliation commission to find a compromise solution to the medics' pay issues. During the strike, the family physicians will not be providing government-funded health care services, except for emergency services. The association is determined to continue the strike until the government meets the medics' demands. The government still has no plan for raising salaries for the family physicians, medical nurses and assistants. The medics are also upset about some extra duties they will be expected to perform after the health care reform.

English: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english ...](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english...)

Liechtenstein

Annual labour market data

June 1, 2017

The annual report 2017, as published by the statistical office, includes a detailed section on wages, employment and labour market developments. The data demonstrate the dependency on foreign workers; more than half of the persons employed do not actually live there. The economy is dominated by the services sector (60.9% of the total employment) and the services sector also pays the highest average gross wages.

English: [http://www.llv.li/files ...](http://www.llv.li/files...)

Lithuania

Labour Code after all finalised

June 15, 2017

The Seimas (the parliament) passed the amendments to the Labour Code, which comes into force on 1 July 2017. The Bill was signed by the country's presidency on 14 June 2017. An earlier version of the Bill was vetoed by the presidency. After the government and the trade unions agreed to improve the code, the parliament decided to override the earlier president's veto. Critics still warn that the new Code will make it easier for employers to dismiss employees.

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

Luxembourg

Hospital sector concludes collective agreement

June 22, 2017

Trade unions OGBL and LCGB had to go a long way before they could reach an agreement; the negotiations for the hospital sector with the FHL Hospital Federation took 2 years. The collective agreement leads to substantial improvements for all 9,000 hospital workers. It includes direct wage increases (2.2% from 1 January 2017), one-off payments in the course of 2017 and better pay scale with improved career paths (entering into effect in October 2017).

English: [https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/hospital-sector-new-collective-agreement ...](https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/hospital-sector-new-collective-agreement...)

Union message (French): [http://www.ogbl.lu/syndicat-sante/cct-fhl-une-bataille ...](http://www.ogbl.lu/syndicat-sante/cct-fhl-une-bataille...)

Bank workers settle deal

June 8, 2017

Bank employees falling under a collective agreement are to receive a €400 bonus. The bargaining partners agreed to introduce this additional bonus within the framework of the definition of a collective agreement for 2017 based on the 2014-16 model. The bonus, which must benefit all bank employees who are part of the collective agreement, will supplement the earlier agreement on the maintenance of the so-called June bonus. Trade unions OGBL, LCGB and Aleba will consult their membership before signing the 2017 collective agreement.

English: [https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/banks-new-bonus ...](https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/banks-new-bonus...)

Malta

Court decides on asbestos case

June 23, 2017

The First Hall of the Civil Courts, in its constitutional jurisdiction, said in a landmark verdict that the legislation concerning workers handling asbestos was not sufficient to protect workers and as a result was a breach to their right to life. The case was initiated by a widow whose husband worked as a fitter at the Malta Drydocks and he together with his colleagues was exposed to asbestos for many years. Workers became aware of the danger of asbestos without the support of their employer and the legislation was not strong enough to protect them. There was sufficient evidence that asbestos was dangerous from 1960, but in Malta the authorities took action in the 1990s. The court ordered that the family be given €9,000 in compensation.

English: [http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/business/law_report/78220/legislation_failed ...](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/business/law_report/78220/legislation_failed...)

Netherlands

Prepack bankruptcy turned down by court

June 22, 2017

Trade union FNV won an important battle in the court room. The Court of Justice of the European Union ruled in favour of four care workers sacked in a prepacked bankruptcy deal. The FNV had initiated the case after the four lost their jobs when childcare group Estro went bust in 2014 and restarted directly after as Smallsteps. In total, 1,000 of the 3,800 workers lost their jobs. A lower Dutch court had asked the CJEU several questions. The CJEU had to decide whether the EU transfer of undertakings directive must be interpreted as meaning that the protection of workers is maintained in a situation, in which the transfer of an undertaking takes place following a declaration of insolvency and in the context of a 'prepack' prepared before the declaration of insolvency and put into effect immediately after that declaration. The CJEU concluded that a 'prepack' procedure does not satisfy all the conditions laid down in the EU transfers of undertakings directive and that, therefore, there can be no derogation from the protection scheme provided for under the directive.

English: [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/06/european-court-tears-up ...](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/06/european-court-tears-up...)

The judgement (English): [https://curia.europa.eu/jcms ...](https://curia.europa.eu/jcms...)

Industrial dispute at Holland Casino ends with deal

June 15, 2017

After a long period of industrial action and warn strikes, the trade unions and the management of Holland Casino (3000 workers) reached a pay deal. The agreement includes a one-off payment of 4.5% over 2016 and a pay increase of 2% in 2017 and in 2018. For the years after (2019 and 2020), the agreement foresees a pay increase in line with the average wage development. There will be no forced redundancies during the period that the agreement is in force.

English: [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/06/unions-and-state-owned-casino ...](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/06/unions-and-state-owned-casino...)

DHL agrees on more direct labour

June 13, 2017

The trade union FNV and CNV reached an agreement with the DHL management that will lead to more direct labour. The parcel delivery company has committed itself to an increase of the share of the workforce that has permanent contracts up to 80%. The unions see this as a confirmation of their position that delivery companies can do without outsourcing and flexjobs. The collective agreement that applies to 1200 workers also leads to a pay increase with 5.6% in two years and an on-off pay of 500 euro. Trade union FNV used during the negotiations the outcome of a survey, organised in the summer of 2016 among the workforce.

The agreement (in Dutch): [https://www.fnv.nl/site/nieuws ...](https://www.fnv.nl/site/nieuws...)

Survey (English): [https://www.fnv.nl/site/alle-sectoren/sectoren/transport-en ...](https://www.fnv.nl/site/alle-sectoren/sectoren/transport-en...)

Dutch: [http://nos.nl/artikel/2177999-doorbraak-voor-vakbond-meer-vaste-banen ...](http://nos.nl/artikel/2177999-doorbraak-voor-vakbond-meer-vaste-banen...)

Norway

Oil workers completed wage deal

June 10, 2017

After the energy firms operating offshore agreed on a wage deal for 2017 with the two largest trade unions representing oil and gas workers, the talks with Lederne, a third union representing some 13% of oil and gas workers or about 1,000 people, continued (see the May CBN). A wage agreement was reached that ended the threat of a strike. The Norwegian Oil and Gas Association (NOG), which negotiated on behalf of energy firms, had warned that a strike by the Lederne trade union would have cut oil and gas output by 443,500 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The five fields that were under threat of strike are operated by Statoil (STL.OL), Shell (RDSa.L) and Eni (ENI.MI). The last strike of oil workers in 2012 lasted for 16 days and cut the country's output by about 13 percent and its natural gas production by about 4 percent.

English: [https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-norway-oil ...](https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-norway-oil...)

[http://www.nasdaq.com/article/rptnorwegian-union-threatens-strike ...](http://www.nasdaq.com/article/rptnorwegian-union-threatens-strike...)

Poland

Thousands of teacher jobs at stake

June 20, 2017

Some 9,400 teachers and school administrators will be out of work when a new school system is introduced on 1 September 2017, a unionist has claimed but the education ministry accused the union of giving 'false data'. A further 22,000 people are set to have their hours cut when the government does away with middle schools and replaces them with an earlier system of eight-year primary and four-year high school, said the head of the Teachers' Union. But the education ministry said in a statement that the changes aim to ensure that teachers keep their jobs. The planned sweeping changes have seen thousands of people take to the streets in protest since they were first floated in 2016.

English: [http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/312573,Thousands-of-teachers-to-lose-jobs ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/312573,Thousands-of-teachers-to-lose-jobs...)

Portugal

Security control on strike

June 24, 2017

The airport operator ANA has warned that security controls are expected to be slower because of striking workers. Workers from the security companies Prosegur and Securitas who ensure the security checks are striking. The aviation and airports trade union (SITAVA) demands collective bargaining, a career with dignity and the improvement of working conditions. As a result of exponential passenger growth, the safety has decreased and workers don't have a decent share of the increased profit.

English: [http://theportugalnews.com/news/airport-security-workers-threaten ...](http://theportugalnews.com/news/airport-security-workers-threaten...)

Teachers on strike

June 18, 2017

The education trade unions have organised a strike that came under strong pressure. A court decreed that minimum services had to be delivered on the day of the teachers' strikes that coincided with school exam. The unions are demanding an elimination of precariousness of educational and non-educational staff, a defreeze of the career progression, the establishment of a retirement scheme and a harmonisation of working time. The unions also want to be involved in future education and training policy reforms.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/school-exams-to-go-ahead-despite ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/school-exams-to-go-ahead-despite...)
[https://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/2082-portugal-education-trade-unions ...](https://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/2082-portugal-education-trade-unions...)

OECD Employment Outlook

June 13, 2017

The 2017 issue of the OECD Employment Outlook presents a comparative scoreboard of labour market performance that provides an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the labour market. Job quality could be improved in the country. This includes both earnings quality (the level and distribution of earnings) as well as labour market insecurity. With regards to the latter, the country should aim to improve the coverage of its unemployment benefit system to provide greater protection to the unemployed.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/portugal/Employment-Outlook-Portugal-EN.pdf>

Minimum wage data

June 4, 2017

The government submitted to the trade union federations and employer organisations a report on the minimum wage development. There were some 730,000 workers earning the statutory minimum monthly salary in March 2017, up 88,900 or almost 14% compared to a year earlier, with the new total representing almost 23% of the whole workforce. The minimum salary was frozen at 485 euro between 2011 and October 2014. It increased in January 2017 to 557 euro.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/minimum-salary-applied-to-730000 ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/minimum-salary-applied-to-730000...)

Romania

Minimum wage differentiated

June 30, 2017

The gross minimum wage will be differentiated based on education, according to the 2017-2020 governing program, published on the Chamber of Deputies' website. The gross minimum wage will grow to RON 2,000 (440 euro) in 2018, RON 2,200 (483 euro) in 2019, and RON 2,400 (527 euro) in 2020. According to the governing program, the gross minimum wage for people with university studies will be higher, respectively RON 2,300 (505 euro) in 2018, RON 2,640 (580 euro) in 2019 and RON 3,000 (659 euro) in 2020. The gross minimum wage currently amounts to RON 1,450 (319 euro), after a RON 200 increase in February. It is now planned that the minimum wage will go up once a year, like in most European countries.

English: [https://www.romania-insider.com/romanias-minimum-wage ...](https://www.romania-insider.com/romanias-minimum-wage...)

Public sector pay will improve

June 7, 2017

The Chamber of Deputies adopted on 7 June the public wage law that will improve the salaries in the public sector, as from 2018. All public employees will see a 25% wage growth starting 1 January 2018, whereas

doctors and education personnel will get additional salary increases starting 1 March 2018. Teachers will receive a 20% wage growth whereas doctors and nurses will see a 100% increase in their salaries in a period ending in 2022.

English: <https://www.romania-insider.com/romanias-govt-postpones-wage-increases ...>

Serbia

Fiat Serbia strikes

June 27, 2017

Workers at a Fiat plant in the town of Kragujevac are staging a work stoppage while remaining in their workplaces. Two one-hour warning strikes were held. Workers demanded an increase in the base wage from RSD 38,000 to 45,000 (approximately 315 to 370 euro), a reorganisation of production or hiring of new workers to reduce the load on workers who are now performing several operations or, in addition to their own, doing the work of others who are on sick or maternity leave.

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

Slovakia

Volkswagen SK strike ends with pay deal

June 27, 2017

At Volkswagen SK, the first ever strike started in June 2017. Workers and trade unions rejected an offer to increase salaries by 4.5% in 2017 and by another 4.2% in 2018. The union was seeking a pay increase of 16% over the two years. After six days of strike action, the bargaining partners concluded a collective agreement with of pay increase in three parts of 14.2% up to August 2019, plus a €500 one-off bonus. The strike at Volkswagen SK received massive support. It is the longest strike recorded in the country and the first at the Bratislava-based car plant.

English: <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20568328/strike-ends-unions-sealed-agreement ...>
<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20563669/thousands-of-people-support-the-vw-strike.html>
<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20563184/last-minute-talks-to-avert-strike-at-volkswagen ...>

Economic growth and demand for skilled workers

June 9, 2017

The OECD 2017 economic survey reports that the unemployment rate has fallen below 10%, its lowest level in seven years. The ageing population will pose a long-term challenge to the labour market. Other analysts speak of a turning point as more and more workers who once commuted to work abroad are able to find employment in Slovakia. Jobs are becoming more available and better paid, and, thus, the motivation to stay at home is bigger. Especially those from poorer regions, no longer have to choose between sitting at home (unemployed) or leaving abroad. The number of citizens working outside the country has fallen by 2.9 percent (4,600 people) in the first quarter of 2017, the second consecutive quarter that the rates have fallen.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/economic-survey-slovak-republic.htm>
<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20553731/changing-trend-fewer-slovaks-commuting ...>

Slovenia

Public sector workers demand 8% pay increase

June 20, 2017

Public sector workers with the lowest wages gathered in front of the Government Palace to demand an immediate across-the-board 8% pay rise as the necessary first step in the ongoing pay talks with the government.

English: <https://english.sta.si/2400934/lowest-paid-public-sector-staff-seek-pay-rise ...>

Labour reform agreed

June 8, 2017

The government reached a deal with social partners to change the labour market regulation act and the labour inspection act. The 3rd piece of the package, changes to the employment relationship act, is expected to be agreed with social partners before the summer break. The bills state that an employment contract must be concluded for work that contains all elements of an employment relationship. Since this does not happen many times, the law stipulates that an inspector can order an employer to offer such a worker a contract within three days. Moreover, changes give the Inspectorate powers in case of non-payment of wages.

English: <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/govt-adopts-two-pieces-of-three-piece-labour-reform>

Spain

Madrid metro workers on strike

June 27, 2017

Metro drivers in Madrid started a five-day strike to coincide with the World Pride festival taking place in the capital. The workers are obliged under labour laws to provide at least 'minimum services', and in the case of the underground train network, this means two-thirds of connections will be running. Drivers are demanding changes to their working hours and practices, including finishing their shifts at the same station where they start. They are asking for 14 extra free days.

English: [http://www.thinkspain.com/news-spain/29214/madrid-metro-drivers ...](http://www.thinkspain.com/news-spain/29214/madrid-metro-drivers...)
<https://www.thelocal.es/20160610/madrid-metro-workers-call-8-days-of-strikes-in-june>

Unions mobilise for the right to strike

June 26, 2017

Sixteen months after 8 trade unionists were acquitted of criminal charges for having taken part in the 2010 general strike against austerity, two union representatives face prison terms of up to 7 years for their participation in the general strike of 2012. On July 7, UGT shop stewards Rubén Ranz and José Manuel Nogales will be tried under Article 315.3 of the criminal code, a legislative vestige of the Franco era which the government has revived. Trade unions UGT and CC.OO have started a campaign to defend the right to strike.

English: <http://www.iuf.org/w/?q=node/5608>

Dock workers extend strikes into July

June 16, 2017

Port docker trade unions have called fresh strikes stretching into July in protest at reforms in the sector, adding to several days of stoppages that have dented trade revenue in the country. The port terminals have already been hit by major disruptions as container shipping companies re-routed their cargoes to avoid strikes in the country, opting for Portugal, Malta or Morocco instead. Dockers are angry over reform of port labour practices passed by the lawmakers in mid-May, which aimed to crack down on closed-shop hiring in a heavily unionised sector. Subsequent negotiations over how to implement the new rules between employers and workers broke down in a dispute over how to safeguard 6,000 jobs. The strikes had so far caused losses of 110 million euro to the economy, according to a statement by the public works ministry.

English: [https://www.reuters.com/article/spain-ports ...](https://www.reuters.com/article/spain-ports...)
<https://www.thelocal.es/20170614/spains-dockers-up-fight-for-jobs-with-two-day-strike>

Union wants better pay for police

June 2, 2017

The police trade union is asking government authorities for a bigger bonus for officers stationed in Catalonia. The Sindicato Profesional de Policía (SPP) says that the mood created by pro-independence activists in the north-eastern region is increasingly similar to the atmosphere of tension that the police still feel in the Basque Country and Navarre, two traditional hot-spots of pro-sovereignty sentiment. The police in these two regions has been earning an extra €600 a month for years. The union is demanding comparable economic incentives to prevent an exodus of members of the National Police force.

English: [http://elpais.com/elpais/2017/06/02/inenglish ...](http://elpais.com/elpais/2017/06/02/inenglish...)

Sweden

Income, wealth and inequality

June 23, 2017

The OECD published a report that documents living standards, earnings and wealth concentration. The country is an egalitarian society in international comparison, and has managed to combine equity with economic efficiency. Rapidly rising inequality and relative poverty from a historical low in the 1980s partly stem from ageing, changing family structures and migration. Living standards increased for all groups, but social benefits rose less than earned income. Incomes of newly-arrived immigrants and single mothers trailed the median. Bottlenecks in the migrant settlement process are costly to migrants and society. A second report looks after gender equality. Women have a high employment rate, outperform men in education and are well represented in government and parliament. Nevertheless, wage differences between genders persist and women are under-represented on private company boards.

English: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver ...](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver...)
[http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download ...](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download...)

APM Terminals to cut 160 staff

June 21, 2017

Port operator APM Terminal said it will cut 160 staff at its Gothenburg terminal, the largest in Scandinavia, as labour disruptions had caused container volumes to drop by 25 percent over the past year. The company blames the Swedish Dockworkers' Union for the consecutive blockades and nine strikes for over a year resulting in several shipping lines no longer calling (at) Gothenburg. The Swedish Dockworkers' Union's (SDU) call for the strike in a campaign that aimed to represent its members in negotiations with the company. Around 85% of the workers at the port are members of the union. The company, which employs 450 people in Gothenburg, wants to secure a no-strike agreement with workers. Since 10 May, the company has locked out SDU members from working the night shift and refuses to hold direct talks with the union.

English: [http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/apm-terminals-to-cut-160-staff ...](http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/apm-terminals-to-cut-160-staff...)

Risk of poverty in 2015

June 12, 2017

A report of the statistical office describes that more than 14 percent, or one out of seven people in the population were at risk of poverty in 2015. Nearly 9 percent were at persistent risk of poverty. This means that they were at risk of poverty in 2015 and during at least two out of the three preceding years. The percentage of people who were at persistent risk of poverty varies widely among different groups. Among single women with children, the proportion was 27%, while among cohabiting adults without children, the proportion was only 3%. Among children aged 0–19 years, the proportion was almost 12%.

English: [http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/household-finances ...](http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/household-finances...)

Switzerland

Teachers demand higher wages

June 27, 2017

The teachers' trade union (LCH) has called for a salary scale with regular increases to be enshrined in law. The union argues that the lack of wage guarantees could deter the brightest workers from the profession, and said kindergartens and primary schools - where pay is particularly low - were already suffering from staff shortages. A union survey made clear that an overwhelming majority of teachers rated the salary situation as bad or unsatisfactory. In real terms, teachers' pay has increased by 10.8 percent over the past 25 years.

English: <https://www.thelocal.ch/20170627/swiss-teachers-call-for-higher-wages>

Wage development report (in German):

[https://www.lch.ch/fileadmin/files/documents/Medienmitteilungen ...](https://www.lch.ch/fileadmin/files/documents/Medienmitteilungen...)

Report on wage differentials

June 20, 2017

A trade union report on income differentials and inequality describes how the gap between the lowest and highest wages has widened in 2016. Trade union Unia analysed the wages in 40 large companies. The management pay increased on average beyond 7%. The ordinary workforce received a sober 0.7% pay increase. The consequence is that the wage ratio changed from 1 to 1150 in 2015, to 1 to 1165 in 2016. Top earners are the managers in the food processing and chemical sectors.

French (summary): [http://www.unia.ch/fr/medias/communiqués ...](http://www.unia.ch/fr/medias/communiqués)

Italian (summary): [http://www.unia.ch/it/attualità ...](http://www.unia.ch/it/attualità)

German (report): [http://www.unia.ch/uploads ...](http://www.unia.ch/uploads)

Uber is illegal and circumvents workers' rights

June 16, 2017

There have been massive protests against the activities of Uber. Zurich's government has stated that UberPop drivers who do not have a taxi permit are operating illegally and could be fined. Drivers must obtain authorisation from local authorities and install a tachograph in their vehicles to monitor speed, driving time and rest times. The national post carrier SBB decided not to make use of the Uber after pressure from the trade unions. The unions said that Uber refuses to pay workers a decent wage and does not contribute to their social security.

English: [https://www.thelocal.ch/20170616/uberpop-drivers-in-zurich ...](https://www.thelocal.ch/20170616/uberpop-drivers-in-zurich)

French: [http://www.uss.ch/themes/travail/droits-syndicaux/article ...](http://www.uss.ch/themes/travail/droits-syndicaux/article)

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

Turkey

Union busting and refusal to negotiate at Thermotechnik

June 15, 2017

Workers responded to the dismissal of union leaders at German radiator and cooling system manufacturer AKG Thermotechnik by staying in the factory. Management called the police, who evicted the workers. A total of 25 workers was dismissed. The workers are maintaining a picket outside the plant. As required by labour law, the union received a majority certificate from the Ministry of Labour. This certifies that the union represents the majority of the 120 workers at the factory, and that the company should begin negotiations. However, the company challenged the certificate in a court case, which is ongoing. Instead of negotiating with the union, on 25 May, the company began dismissing union leaders.

English: <http://www.industriall-union.org/akg-thermotechnik-fires-union-leaders-in-turkey>

Glass workers win pay increase after unprecedented action

June 12, 2017

Some six thousand members of trade union Kristal-İş won a significant victory after staging a remarkable work-in at nine Şişecam glass factories across the country. The union announced an intention to strike on 24 May, after failing to agree the wage offer from their employer. To support the employer, the government banned the strike, citing national security concerns. The workers resolved to stay in their factories until their demands were met. They maintained their three daily shifts, and at the end of the shift, pitched tents on the factory grounds or slept in the canteen. After thirteen days of action, the company agreed to meet with workers' representatives. After three rounds of negotiation, a comprehensive two-year collective bargaining agreement was signed between the union and the employer. The agreement includes shift bonuses for night work, holiday, travel and clothing allowance, and a significant wage increase. Low paid workers got the highest increase, with the average being 16.3%.

English: [http://www.industriall-union.org/turkish-glass-workers-win-large-increase ...](http://www.industriall-union.org/turkish-glass-workers-win-large-increase)

United Kingdom

Series of strikes coming up in hospitals

June 21, 2017

Cleaners, porters and security staff at several hospitals are to stage a series of strikes in a dispute over pay. Workers are planning a three-day strike from July 4, followed by a seven-day stoppage starting on July 11 and then a 14-day strike from July 25. Further action will be planned for August and September. A Unite regional officer said that the workers have voted for strike action by a massive majority because they have seen their real living standards drop year on year. They are demanding a 30p-per-hour wage increase. The manager of the contractor Serco said the company has increased salaries for over 230 team members and benefited over 110 permanent staff by an average of 3.5%.

English: [http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/hospital-workers-vote-for-strikes ...](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/hospital-workers-vote-for-strikes...)

UNICEF warns for child poverty

June 15, 2017

In a UNICEF publication 'Report Card 14: Building the Future: Children and the Sustainable Development Goals in Rich Countries' 41 high-income countries were assessed in relation to children and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report finds that one in five children live in relative income poverty measured at 60 percent of the median household income in the UK. 34 percent of children experience multi-dimensional poverty. The country ranks in the bottom third under the goal of decent work and employment (31st out of 40 countries) with 8.4 percent of 15-19-year-old not in education, employment and training.

English: [https://www.unicef.org.uk/press-releases/unicef-uk-uk-not-yet-meeting ...](https://www.unicef.org.uk/press-releases/unicef-uk-uk-not-yet-meeting...)

Unpaid wages – features and prevalence

June 9, 2017

An interim report from the Unpaid Britain project at the Middlesex University London, entitled *The Weighted Scales of Economic Justice*, reveals that employers withhold £1.2 billion in wages and £1.5 billion in holiday pay from workers every year. The researchers also found that there were 23,000 occasions on which unpaid or delayed wage payments made workers were left without food. Some types of unpaid wages occur repeatedly ('little and often'), including failures to provide holiday pay, unpaid hours of work and unauthorised deductions. Sectors most likely to abuse workers (including failing to pay wages) are identified as 'sports activities, amusement and recreation'; 'food and beverage services'; 'other personal services'; 'employment activities'; 'accommodation', to which, based on other London related considerations, are added 'arts and entertainment'; and 'construction'.

English: [http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf ...](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf...)

Chronology of labour law updated

June 2, 2017

The Institute of Employment Rights IER has published a very useful and updated overview of the history of the British labour legislation (1979-2017) with the aim to expose the impact of Tory-inspired legislation for trade unionists. The last example in a long row is the 2016 Trade Union Act that, according to IER, aims to make it extremely difficult or impossible for workers to engage in lawful industrial action, and to starve the trade unions and the labour movement of funds. The IER was created in 1989 as a thinktank to inform the debate around trade union rights and labour law by providing information, critical analysis, and policy ideas through a network of academics, researchers and lawyers.

English: <http://www.ier.org.uk/resources/chronology-labour-law-1979-2017>

Blog describes fall in real wages

June 1, 2017

Two researchers associated to the London School of Economics published an election analysis report on real wages and living standards. Since the global financial crisis of 2007/08, workers' real wages and family living standards in the UK have suffered to an extent unprecedented in modern history. The research, presented with data and figures, shows that real wages of the typical (median) worker have fallen by almost 5% since 2008, while real family incomes for families of working age have just about recovered to pre-crisis levels. Almost all groups of individuals and families – with the exception of minimum wage workers and pensioners – are no better off on average than they were in 2008.

English: [http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2017/06/01/whats-happening-with-real-wages ...](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2017/06/01/whats-happening-with-real-wages...)

The report: [http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download ...](http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download...)

For more information, please contact the editor Jan Cremers, Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (AIAS) cbn-aias@uva.nl or the Head of communications at the ETUI, Willy De Backer wdebacker@etui.org. For previous full issues of the *Collective bargaining newsletter* please visit www.etui.org/E-Newsletters/Collective-bargaining-newsletter or consult the archive with all articles in our database at www.cbnarchive.eu.

You may find further information on the ETUI at www.etui.org, and on the AIAS at www.uva-aias.net.

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