

collective bargaining

Issue 7-8/2017 | July-August

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

Labour exploitation in Europe

August 10, 2017

An annual study from global risk consultancy Verisk Maplecroft reveals that modern slavery risks have risen in nearly three quarters of the 28 EU member states in 2016. The research, which assesses countries on the strength of their laws, the effectiveness of their enforcement and the severity of violations, shows drops in the scores for 20 countries across the EU. The EU countries posing the highest risk are Romania, Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Bulgaria – key entry points for migrants who are extremely vulnerable to severe forms of forced labour, such as servitude and trafficking. The findings come shortly after the Economist revealed huge weaknesses in companies' efforts to secure responsible global supply chains. Global brands and their local suppliers often exploit developing countries' low wages and weak social and environmental standards to produce low-cost goods at the expense of local workers' welfare.

English: [https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis ...](https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis...)

The Economist report: [http://growthcrossings.economist.com/wp-content ...](http://growthcrossings.economist.com/wp-content...)

Wage improvement in CEE-countries

July 25, 2017

News agency Reuter writes that with employment rates at record highs, and workers demanding wages closer to western levels, the cheap-labour model in CEE-countries that has driven growth since the fall of communism is on the way out, thanks to effective trade union action. Currently wages are rising faster than in Western Europe, but the disparity is still substantial, according to the trade unions. Manufacturers share less of their income with workers in Central and Eastern Europe than they do in Western Europe. In the EU, wages on average accounts for 47.5% of economic output, according to Eurostat - but while that figure reaches 50.9% in Germany it drops to just 40.4% in the Czech Republic.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-easteuropa-economy-analysis ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-easteuropa-economy-analysis...)

Wage data: [http://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com ...](http://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com...)

Collectively agreed pay in 2016

July 25, 2017

A Eurofound report discusses developments in collectively agreed wages in the EU in 2016, putting them into the perspective of developments over the past 15 years. The tendency for growth in both nominal and real collectively agreed wages from 2015 continued. In two countries (Belgium and Malta), collectively agreed pay in real terms was still not above the pre-crisis level. In terms of real wage increases (that is, wage increases taking into account the change in the level of prices), Slovakia had the highest increase (4.1%), followed by the Czech Republic (2.4%) and Germany (2%). The lowest real increases were observed in Finland (0.2%) and Malta (0.3%), while the real collectively agreed wage actually fell in Belgium (-1.2%).

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

Work-life balance and labour market participation

July 19, 2017

This background paper is a contribution by Eurofound to the Informal Employment and Social Affairs Council under the Estonian EU-Presidency of the Council. Above and beyond legislative measures, collective bargaining plays an important role as a regulatory instrument, including at the company level. Clauses on work-life balance issues in collective agreements are more prevalent in countries where collective bargaining coverage is relatively high (80% and higher) and – generally speaking – less prevalent or non-existent in countries with lower collective bargaining coverage. The report includes tables that illustrate this.

English: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites ...>

OECD Main Economic Indicators 7-2017

July 11, 2017

The OECD published its updated statistical material on unit labour costs, hourly wages and other economic indicators. The monthly Main Economic Indicators (MEI) presents comparative statistics that provide an overview of recent international economic developments for the 35 OECD countries, the euro zone and a number of non-member economies, with separate sections for all the countries.

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

Advocate general: Uber operates illegal

July 4, 2017

The latest blow for Uber comes from the advocate general of the Court of Justice of the European Union. The case before the court deals with the question whether Uber should be treated as a taxi service in France, and therefore be subject to safety and employment rules, or as a digital platform that connects independent drivers with passengers. In a nonbinding recommendation, the main adviser of the EU's highest court says that the ride-hailing service has to abide the usual rules governing taxi services. The advocate general takes the view that Member States may prohibit and punish the illegal exercise of a transport activity such as UberPop without having to notify the Commission in advance. He recalls that, in accordance with his Opinion of 11 May 2017 in the Uber Spain case, the UberPop service falls within the field of transport.

English: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/04/business/uber-ecj-europe-france.html>

The opinion: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs ...>

The earlier opinion: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs ...>

Austria

Agreement settled at ÖBB-Postbus

August 18, 2017

Trade union GPF finalised the negotiations at ÖBB-Postbus. The one-year agreement includes a pay increase between 2.1 and 2.3%, with a minimum of 42 euro, per 1 September 2017. The negotiators, trade union reps and works council members, had formulated demands for a pay increase beyond inflation.

German: <http://www.gpf.at/news ...>

Pay deal for juridical assistants

July 25, 2017

Trade union GPA concluded a collective agreement for around 15,000 juridical assistants working in the Vienna region. One of the key achievements is the increase of the monthly minimum pay to 1500 euro (as of 1 October 2017). Another improvement is the increase of the apprenticeship remuneration to a monthly 700 euro in the first year. GPA is still fighting for a country-wide collective agreement that would guarantee the achieved minimum wage all over the country.

German: <https://www.gpa-djp.at/cms ...>

The agreement (in German): <http://www.kollektivvertrag.at/kv/rechtsanwalt-angestellte-w-ang>

Selective application of holiday rights disputed

July 25, 2017

The Chamber of Labour (AK) wants 6-week holiday rights for all. Currently, the holiday right is limited to 5

weeks. Only workers with at least 25 years of services in a company profit from an additional week. The AK strives for an extension of this right for all workers and is of the opinion that the restriction is unfair for temporary workers, women and EU-workers that are mobile. So far, a national procedure in a case with workers from different member states, often with long careers at home, failed before the regional and the higher court. The organisation has decided to appeal to the Court of Justice of the EU.

German: [https://ooe.arbeiterkammer.at/service/presse ...](https://ooe.arbeiterkammer.at/service/presse...)

Pay scheme changes in retail

July 24, 2017

The partners in collective bargaining in the retail sector agreed on a new pay scheme that starts 1 December 2017. Main characteristic is the improvement of pay for newcomers. The minimum monthly wage increases to 1600 euro gross. It took three and a half years to come to an agreement. The old agreement had a long list of occupations, with functions that no longer exist. The partners formulated a scheme of 8 function groups (two categories of basic assistant workers, four categories sales personnel without and with managerial tasks and two categories plant managers and directors), to be implemented until December 2021.

German: [http://www.vienna.at/mehr-fuer-einsteiger-weniger-fuer-aeltere ...](http://www.vienna.at/mehr-fuer-einsteiger-weniger-fuer-aeltere...)

OECD economic survey 2017

July 17, 2017

The OECD published the results of its survey with thematic chapters on digitalisation and on the inclusive labour market. Employment has expanded, driven by rising participation of women and elderly and by immigration, although hours worked per worker have declined. Nonetheless, like in most OECD countries, productivity has slowed. The country's transition to a digital economy and society is progressing but is slower than in the most advanced economies. A whole-of-government approach should help embrace change and facilitate the flourishing of innovative businesses, work practices and lifestyles.

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

Belgium

Luggage handlers reach a deal

August 23, 2017

Workers at the baggage handling company Swissport have resumed work after a strike in protest against working conditions that caused dozens of flights to be cancelled. According to the trade unions a whole list of problems has to be tackled. The most important were the aim to change part-time contracts into full-time contracts and a bonus for the hard work during the summer holiday period. A draft agreement has been reached with the Swissport management. The negotiators also agreed on a calendar for further talks.

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

Overnight dismissals at EDF

August 3, 2017

At the very same moment that the EDF Group's Committee for Dialogue on Social Responsibility met for the annual meeting a group of workers of EDF subsidiary Luminus was sacked. Following the announcement of the dismissals, Luminus workers, together with national unions, staged protests and strikes at various sites to express outrage at this blatant disregard for basic labour rights and lack of consultation with unions, and they asked for international support. Under this pressure, the Luminus management finally apologised for the way the dismissals were announced in a press release.

English: <http://www.industriall-union.org/fired-by-voicemail-an-edf-worker-speaks-out-o>

[http://www.world-psi.org/en/edfs-astonishing-hypocrisy ...](http://www.world-psi.org/en/edfs-astonishing-hypocrisy...)

French: [http://www.lavenir.net/ent ...](http://www.lavenir.net/ent...)

Job increase has not reduced poverty rate

July 7, 2017

HIVA (the Leuven Institute for Labour) reports that many jobs, which were created in the last decade, are often low-quality jobs, with 40% of the new jobs part-time, half of them low-paid, and about half of them temporary. This makes workers more vulnerable. About 40,000 people who managed to find employment over the past 10 years, are still living in poverty. The rate of so-called 'working poor' is still among the lowest in the EU, but figures are going up. Moreover, the situation of the unemployed has deteriorated. About 10 years ago, some 30% of those out of work was living in poverty. Nowadays, this is 45%.

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

Pay increase after strike threat

July 7, 2017

Bus drivers of the Flemish public transport company De Lijn suspended their strike actions after an agreement was reached on a pay rise of 1 percent. Trade unions at the transport company had called for strikes on 1, 2 and 3 July. The social unrest was triggered by a wage dispute: workers were promised a pay increase of 1.1 percent. This was even put on paper in a policy agreement but the management only wanted to allow the pay rise together with other measures rejected by the workers' representatives.

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

French: [http://www.7sur7.be/7s7/fr ...](http://www.7sur7.be/7s7/fr...)

Dutch: [http://www.hln.be/hln/nl ...](http://www.hln.be/hln/nl...)

Bulgaria

Minimum wage for teachers increases

August 30, 2017

The government announced the applicable minimum wages in school education as of 1 September 2017, following a promised increase of 15%. The aim of the government is a doubling of the teacher's salaries in three years. The minimum wage for a chief teacher will be BGN 836 (428 euro), and for a senior teacher - BGN 792. Teachers, educators, speech therapists, psychologists, pedagogical counsellors, choreographers, sports coaches, hearing and speech rehabilitators will receive salaries starting from BGN 760 (390 euro). Two additional wages are introduced for teachers. From 1 January 2018, 4% of the salary will be paid to teachers participating in joint teams for enrolment and retention of students at compulsory pre-school and school age. Educators, who carry out additional training for the students, will receive the same percentage.

English: [http://www.novinite.com/articles ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles...)

[http://www.novinite.com/articles ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles...)

Policemen on the street for better pay

August 8, 2017

Policemen have taken the street in several cities to put pressure on ongoing pay negotiations. The trade unions demand higher wages and better working conditions. More demonstrations are planned. Besides more money, workers insist on changes in the texts of a Law from the Ministry of Interior related to the use of physical force and aids. The unions have announced that if their requests are not heard, they will organise more meetings in Sofia in the autumn to express their dissatisfaction.

English: [http://www.novinite.com/articles ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles...)

[http://www.novinite.com/articles ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles...)

Croatia

Protest against poor working conditions in maritime sector

August 8, 2017

Jadrolinija workers in Split started with industrial action due to poor working conditions, low-pay and violations of workers' rights. Workers at the shipping company complained about these problems for years. Workers do not have a collective agreement at all, although the management promised several times to start negotiations. Moreover, according to the trade unions, the management has taken unilateral decisions on working time and shifts that violate the provisions of the Labour Act and the Maritime Labour Convention.

English: <http://www.total-croatia-news.com/news ...>

Not all public workers are equal

July 20, 2017

A 2% pay increase in September 2017 will be implemented only to state employees, but not to other public services workers. It will be the first time in recent history that salaries of state employees and public services workers will be calculated from a different base with divergent benefits. Since the number of state employees is just one-third of the number of public services workers (60,000 vs 180,000) this decision is cheaper for the state budget, but it can cause serious social unrest. The three salary increases in 2017 for state employees are part of an agreement between part of the trade unions and the government, which is an 'implementation plan' for an agreement signed in 2009, when state employees and public services workers agreed for their base salary to be reduced due to the economic crisis. The government offered the same agreement to public services workers, but it simultaneously demanded that they should fully renounce the benefits for 2016 and all the other increases, which their trade union representatives did not accept.

English: <http://www.total-croatia-news.com/business ...>

Cyprus

Agreement on the return of the cost of living allowance

July 28, 2017

Trade unions and employers signed an agreement that leads to the return of the cost of living allowance (Cola) after being frozen for 5 years as part of austerity measures introduced as the country sought a bailout. Cola will be reintroduced on 1 January 2018 for a three-year transition period pending a permanent arrangement. The deal provides that Cola will be added to the salary once a year, provided the economy showed growth in the second and third quarters of the previous year. The allowance will represent 50% of the annual rise in the consumer price index, and it will be incorporated into basic salaries. Salaries will not be reduced in the event of deflation and if conditions for its payment are not met it will be frozen.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/07/28/deal-signed-return-cost-living-allowance/>
<http://in-cyprus.com/peo-and-oeb-accept-labour-ministers-cola-proposal/>

Bank workers suspend strike and come to a deal

July 27, 2017

Workers at APS Debt Servicing bank, owned by the Prague-based APS Holdings SA and the Hellenic bank, started a 48-hour strike. The protest was against planned changes in the employment terms of workers. Trade union Etyk later on suspended the strike following the intervention of the labour ministry that led to an agreement. According to the deal struck, the jobs and benefits of Hellenic employees transferred to APS are 'fully safeguarded', with clear provisions ensuring 'existing and future collective agreements, the right to be transferred back to the bank, and many other clauses protecting colleagues fully'.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/07/27/labour-minister ...>

Czech Republic

Increase of minimum wage promised

August 21, 2017

The government announced that from 1 January 2018, the minimum wage will be raised by 1.200 crowns to 12.200 CZK per month (467 euro). The minimum hourly rate will increase from 66 to 73.2 crowns. The aim is to structurally increase the minimum wage to the level of 40% of the average wage.

English: <https://brnodaily.cz/2017/08/21/breaking-news/czech-minimum-wages-to-grow-again/>

Pay rise for teachers and public workers

August 18, 2017

The prime minister made public that he will support the intention to raise the salaries of teachers by 15%

and of the rest of the state sector employees by 10% in the talks of the government with trade unions. Other parties have raised their voice in the same direction. According to trade union confederation CMKOS, the change is to take effect in November 2017. The union finds the proposal, which apply for some 670,000 firefighters, policemen, teachers, carers, artists and other professions, reasonable and corresponding with the economic growth. The average gross monthly pay of a teacher was slightly under 28,000 crowns (1072 euro) in the first quarter of 2017.

English: [http://praguemonitor.com/2017/08/16/czech-pm-supports-pay-rise ...](http://praguemonitor.com/2017/08/16/czech-pm-supports-pay-rise...)
<http://praguemonitor.com/2017/07/31/czech-parties-want-more-money-schools-teachers>

Collective agreement reached at SKF factory

July 3, 2017

New trade union activities at a SKF site in Chodov led to a first collective agreement. The process started two years ago when, through combined efforts of SKF factory workers, members of trade union OZ KOVO, with the assistance of the SKF World Union Committee, a new union organisation was set up at the SKF site in Chodov. This group of dedicated union activists made a major step forward by inviting factory management to discussions. The negotiations have led to the signing of a collective agreement covering all employees at the factory. The agreement includes a 6% increase of the base hourly wages for blue collar and 3% for white collar workers and a Christmas bonus of minimum 50% independent of the financial situation at the site.

English: [http://www.industrial-union.org/first-union-agreement-reached ...](http://www.industrial-union.org/first-union-agreement-reached...)

Denmark

Strike threat of pilots

August 28, 2017

Members of Danish and Norwegian unions Dansk Pilotforening (DPF), SAS-flygeres Forening (NSF) and SAS Norge Pilotforening (SNF) are threatening to walk out in September after failing to reach an agreement on how to interpret rules in a collective bargaining agreement. The dispute is about the pilots' schedules during peak seasons and how to interpret the collective agreement rules for pilots' working conditions.

English: <https://www.thelocal.dk/20170828/scandinavian-pilots-threaten-autumn-strike>

Atypical workers confronted with poor conditions

July 21, 2017

A study of the conditions for atypical employees, commissioned by trade union confederation LO, reveals that the number of the temporary workers has been stable since the turn of the millennium, but the number of part-time workers has increased. Furthermore, atypical employees are experiencing increasingly poorer conditions and rights. They stand a much greater risk of not getting pay during sickness, pay when taking time off to care for a sick child, pay during maternity/paternity leave or the collective agreement-guaranteed sixth week of paid holidays.

English: [http://www.publicnow.com/view ...](http://www.publicnow.com/view...)
The report (in Danish): [https://lo.dk/wp-content/uploads ...](https://lo.dk/wp-content/uploads...)

No labour shortages according to study

July 5, 2017

A biannual recruitment study from the Ministry for Employment concludes that by far the majority of businesses have no problem recruiting workers. There are still 114,900 unemployed workers who can and want to work. Less than one in ten companies in the survey had asked the unemployment insurance fund or the trade union for help in trying to find workers. More than 40 percent of the affected companies reply that they could have done more to attract the necessary manpower. At the same time, the survey shows that there is great potential when it comes to skilled labour.

English: <https://lo.dk/en/ministry-employment-no-domestic-workforce-shortage/>

Estonia

Positive labour market data

August 20, 2017

According to Statistics Estonia, the unemployment rate stood at 7%, the employment rate at 66.9% and the labour force participation rate at 72% in the 2nd quarter of 2017. The labour force participation rate reached its highest level for 20 years. Partly, this is the consequence of the fact that the number of working-age persons continued its slow decrease. The Unemployment Insurance Fund stated that of those registered as unemployed, 28% are people with reduced work capacity.

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

<http://news.err.ee/606706/registered-unemployment-unchanged-at-4-6-percent-in-june>

Finland

Detailed wages statistics published

August 16, 2017

The statistical office released its yearly evaluation of hourly wage levels across dozens of professions. The ranking only looks at hourly wages, not salaries and other forms of remuneration, so it only reveals part of the whole earned-income picture. Hourly wage earners working in the private sector earned an average of 15.98 euro in the last quarter of 2016 (up 1.1% compared to the same period in 2015). The data indicate that the pay gap between men and women in terms of average hourly wages went down slightly, and stands at an even 3 euro. Men earned an average hourly wage of 16.49 euro in late 2016, women earned 13.49. The 2017 statistics show a stronger increase of the wages in some sectors (like construction and manufacture).

English: [http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til ...](http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til...)

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

Support for train drivers' strike

August 14, 2017

Seven transport unions say they support the Finnish Locomotive Drivers' Union's strike, which is protesting government plans to open the country's railroad monopoly to competition. The unions do not plan to join in the 30-hour strike but have said that they are prepared to take other measures in order to reverse the government's plans. The plans include the creation of three companies to control the rolling stock, real estate and maintenance of the railways, along with plans to open services to competitive tendering and other operators to enter the market.

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

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

Overworked nurses protest

July 21, 2017

Overworked nurses are dealing with seemingly unending lines of patients at the Kuopio University Hospital (KYS) in central Finland. The nurses have risen up in rebellion, as they say the hospital administration refuses to acknowledge that there is a staff shortage. Since the spring, the nursing staff has no longer agreed to come in for extra shifts when scheduled workers fall ill. Intensive care of the patients has suffered due to the lack of replacements, a service lapse that the nurses have consequently reported to the regional administrative authority in the form of 17 complaints or statements. The closure of several municipal emergency care units in the outlying areas is another reason KYS has become so crowded.

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

Finnish: [http://www.iltalehti.fi/kotimaa ...](http://www.iltalehti.fi/kotimaa...)

Unions want more assist for unemployed

July 13, 2017

In reaction to governmental communications related to skill deficits, the trade unions have reminded of the fact that the country carries a legacy of long-term unemployment from the depression of the 1990s. Those who have been out of work for such a long time often find themselves with the wrong type of qualifications

for today's labour market. The Central Organisation of Trade Unions (SAK) thinks the government needs to provide more support and assistance to unemployed workers for finding work. They are also concerned about new measures affecting the unemployed, such as cuts in unemployment support and increased conditions for the unemployed to maintain their full benefits. SAK is also calling on the government to make parental leave more flexible to help young women, in particular, find employment.

English: [https://www.equaltimes.org/what-is-the-solution-to-finland ...](https://www.equaltimes.org/what-is-the-solution-to-finland...)

France

Deliveroo gig riders strike over pay

August 28, 2017

Riders working for the food delivery company Deliveroo have staged protests in Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux and Nantes to complain about changes to their pay. Deliveroo employs all riders as independent contractors, rather than as employees, meaning that they do not have rights such as the minimum wage or paid holidays. The company switched all its riders from 27 August 2017 to the same contract in which they are paid per delivery (between 5.0-5.75 euro) rather than an hourly rate. The riders say that this leads to pay losses of 20-30%. Their demands are 7.5 euro per delivery and a guaranteed minimum of two deliveries per hour.

English: [http://en.rfi.fr/france/20170828-french-deliveroo-takeaway-food-riders-protest ...](http://en.rfi.fr/france/20170828-french-deliveroo-takeaway-food-riders-protest...)

Warm autumn with strikes and protests looms

August 26, 2017

In his election manifesto president Macron pledged to use a special presidential decree to force through measures making it easier, among other things, for employers to hire and fire. He has a clear parliamentary majority, so the biggest menace to Macron's plans comes from the unions and the street. Trade unions are very suspicious about the proposed labour law changes, which include capping industrial tribunal payments and allowing employers to negotiate with unions at local rather than national level – a threat to collective bargaining that is the motor of trade union power.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/26/emmanuel-macron-reform ...](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/26/emmanuel-macron-reform...)

Teachers want decent living wage

August 11, 2017

The trade unions in education have referred to the government's commitment to the Protocol on Professional Pathways, Careers and Remuneration that ensures public servants a decent standard of living. In a joint letter, the signatory trade unions recall that at the meeting of the Joint Council of the Public Service on 10 July 2017, the Minister for Budget, Public Accounts and Civil Administration announced on behalf of the government, in respect of the Protocol, that 'the public finances situation compels us to examine the timetable for the implementation of the Protocol and the staggering of its introduction'.

English: [https://www.ei-ie.org/en/detail/15311/france-education-unions ...](https://www.ei-ie.org/en/detail/15311/france-education-unions...)

Protests by EasyJet pilots

August 15, 2017

In an open letter to the company's CEO, the pilots' union said EasyJet was stuck in an 'infernal spiral' which put both crew and passengers at risk. According to the pilots the budget airline easyJet's cost-cutting measures are threatening passenger safety. The union said that managers were scheduling 'unrealistic' flight plans, asking pilots to do more flights than logistically possible - even to the point of exceeding legal safety limits. As a result of this planning, 'the employee is reduced to a cost, and the passenger to a profit'. During a meeting between the union and the management a temporary solution to the issues raised was reached.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/15/easyjet ...](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/15/easyjet...)

Statistical 2017 report on employment and wages

July 12, 2017

The statistics office INSEE has released its 2017 report on the country's jobs market titled: 'Work, Unemployment and Wages'. In 1984 some 94% of the workers were on permanent contracts; by 2016 that figure has dropped to 85.3%. Temporary contracts have increased from 5% in 1984 to 11% in 2016. The

labour market is recovering, with 255,000 new jobs created in 2016. This has not led to an improvement of earnings, as the increase of the labour cost stayed around 1% in recent years. The average monthly wage for a full-time worker in the private sector stands at 2,230 euro (net, with social charges paid). The pay gap is still substantial, with the average wage for a woman working in the private sector 14% lower than for men.

English: [https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques ...](https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques)

Germany

Interim report: 2.5% wage increase on average

August 2, 2017

The WSI Collective Agreement Archive presented a half-year report on the wage developments in 2017. Based on the available data, the report has calculated an average wage increase at 2.5% in 2017. In the first half of the year several agreements included a pay increase in between 2 and 3%. Most of the agreements were signed for a two-year period. The real wage increase, however, will be lower, due to higher inflation.

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

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

Fast food workers have their national agreement

July 27, 2017

The Food and Allied Workers Union (NGG) has signed a national agreement with the fast food employers' association following months of nation-wide strikes and national and local protest actions in response to the employers' refusal to pay a living wage. Fast food workers will receive wage increases of between 7.3% and 8.7% over the coming 29 months, and a new starting wage of 9 euro per hour beginning 1 August 2017.

English: [http://www.iuf.org/w ...](http://www.iuf.org/w)

Pay inequality law into force

July 14, 2017

The law on progressive pay transparency to better enable women to seek equal pay has entered into force on 6 July 2017. The legislation should make it easier for many women to learn whether or not they're being paid equally to their male counterparts. According to the law, companies with at least 200 employees are required to provide employees with average salary information upon request. Employees are only entitled to this information when they have at least six co-workers of the opposite sex in a similar position.

English: [http://www.care2.com/causes/german-pay-inequality-law-goes-into-effect ...](http://www.care2.com/causes/german-pay-inequality-law-goes-into-effect)

Court upholds controversial strike-law

July 12, 2017

The federal constitutional court has ruled that a controversial law concerning collective wage agreements is compatible with the constitution. The strike legislation mandates that where there are competing collective wage agreements within one firm, the agreement between the trade union with the largest membership and the employer applies. With this Law, the federal government tries to prevent power struggles between different trade unions in which strikes are called by one subgroup of employees to the detriment of the wider labour force. Small-side unions fear that they will lose power. Nevertheless, in the ruling the court said that the government has also to improve the protection of smaller unions.

English: [http://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/EN ...](http://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/EN)

The court's ruling (in German):

[https://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/SharedDocs/Entscheidungen/DE ...](https://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/SharedDocs/Entscheidungen/DE)

Job growth myth or miracle?

July 11, 2017

A policy brief with a review of the country's labour market reforms of the early 2000 reveals that the impact of the reforms is often overstated because they happened to coincide with the end of the country's decade-long construction bust. The provided data show that the number of citizens listed as having a job has grown by about 15 per cent since the lows in the mid-1990s. But the total number of hours worked is less than 2 per cent higher over the same period and still significantly lower than in the early 1990s. The disconnect

between jobs and hours worked went hand in hand with a large increase in the share of Germans at risk of poverty. The author also points out that more than a fifth of the workers are low-paid (wages below two-thirds of the median, or about 10.50 euro an hour as of 2014).

English: <http://www.cer.eu/in-the-press/myth-german-jobs-miracle>

The policy brief: [http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pbrief_german_labour ...](http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pbrief_german_labour...)

Pilot's dismissal at 65 is justifiable

July 5, 2017

Flight instructor Werner Fries took his case to a labour court in 2013 after his employer, Lufthansa, ended his contract when he turned 65 years, in line with EU law that forces passenger airline pilots to retire at 65. The court referred the case to the Court of Justice of the European Union, which ruled that the action is legal and can be justified by the aim of ensuring civil aviation safety in Europe.

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

The CJEU's decision: [http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document ...](http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document...)

Greece

Museum and cultural sites staff continue disputes

August 29, 2017

Workers at archaeological sites and museums are involved in a constant dispute. The trade union of the Ministry of Culture employees (POE-YPPO) announced a 48-hour strike in July. Later on, the strike was called off after a meeting with the responsible ministry. The union said that no response from the ministry to the demands could have led to a (temporary) closure of the museums and archaeological sites. The union wanted the immediate hiring of 33 archaeologists and 200 specialized antiquities guards to cover the needs of museums and archaeological sites. It also had other demands such as resolving pending cases of the Expropriation of Archaeological Resources Fund and the Employee Solidarity Fund, along with safeguarding the rights of other workers in museums and archaeological sites such as cleaners and guards. The last protest in this row is a rally that has been scheduled to demand the payment of workers on short-term contracts.

English: [http://www.ekathimerini.com/221203/article/ekathimerini/news ...](http://www.ekathimerini.com/221203/article/ekathimerini/news...)

[http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/07/27/attica-museums-and-archaeological-sites ...](http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/07/27/attica-museums-and-archaeological-sites...)

[http://nationalpost.com/pmn/news-pmn/weekend-strike-to-shut-acropolis ...](http://nationalpost.com/pmn/news-pmn/weekend-strike-to-shut-acropolis...)

Hospitality workers protest against neo-liberal reforms

July 20, 2017

Hotel and restaurant employees walked off work on 20 July 2017 to protest against the government's labour reforms. Hundreds of workers in the tourism sector gathered in central Athens as part of a strike against reforms that will allow 'flexible' forms of work and a lower minimum wage: the workers say that the reform will weaken collective agreements that protect workers. Union officials complained that employers in large hotels are forcing workers to sign contracts with extremely low wages and exhausting working hours.

English: [http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Greek-Hotel-Workers-Strike ...](http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Greek-Hotel-Workers-Strike...)

Hungary

Local civil servants on strike

July 18, 2017

Almost 6,000 civil servants working at local governments went on strike at more than 100 settlements across the country demanding wage raises. The trade union of Hungarian Employees of the Public Sector (MKKSZ) organised the strike to complain that civil servants have not received any wage raises in the past nine years. The strike was called for after negotiations between the representatives of the union and the government failed. The trade union wants a 25% pay rise as a first step in a three-year program.

English: [https://bbj.hu/economy/hungarian-civil-servants-go-on-strike ...](https://bbj.hu/economy/hungarian-civil-servants-go-on-strike...)

Protests of Tesco workers

July 7, 2017

Workers of supermarket chain Tesco called for a demonstration on 8 July 2017. Workers planned the demonstration to raise awareness of the labour shortage in the sector, which is becoming a major concern. According to the trade union of commercial employees (KASZ), the only way to overcome this issue is by raising wages. The Tesco management reacted in a press release defending its wage policies in 2017. The company says that both its long-term goal and the main tendency of its wage development policy are the same: to remain among the top three best-paying retail supermarket chains in terms of its wage package as a whole, while concentrating on raising the wages of the lowest earners among its workforce in particular.

English: [https://bbj.hu/economy/tesco-workers-eye-strike-if-demo-unsuccessful ...](https://bbj.hu/economy/tesco-workers-eye-strike-if-demo-unsuccessful...)
[https://bbj.hu/business/tesco-commits-to-double-digit-wage-rises-in-2017 ...](https://bbj.hu/business/tesco-commits-to-double-digit-wage-rises-in-2017...)

Iceland

Wage index up 7.3% in one year

July 24, 2017

The wage index, which is calculated by Statistics Iceland, shows that wages in June increased by 1% compared to the month before, and the 12-month increase in wages has been 7.3%. Inflation stays low and, consequently, the purchasing power continues to grow. The real wage index, which tracks the purchasing power of wages, peaked in 2007, after having risen continuously since 1994. The 2008 financial crash caused real wages to drop significantly, and between 2007 and 2010 the purchasing power of wages dropped by 11%. Since 2010 real wages have been on the increase again, reaching the pre-crash peak in 2014. From May 2014 and spring 2017 the purchasing power of wages has increased by 19%.

English: [http://www.statice.is/publications/news-archive/wages-and-income ...](http://www.statice.is/publications/news-archive/wages-and-income...)
[http://icelandmag.visir.is/article/purchasing-power-continues-grow ...](http://icelandmag.visir.is/article/purchasing-power-continues-grow...)

Ireland

SIPTU members support public sector pay deal

August 10, 2017

SIPTU members have voted by a large majority to accept the proposals in the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020. A count of ballots revealed that 76% of the members voted in favour of the proposals with 24% against. The Agreement, which is an extension to the Lansdowne Road Agreement, provides for pay restoration and other improvements for workers in the public service.

English: [http://www.siptu.ie/media/pressreleases2017/mainnews ...](http://www.siptu.ie/media/pressreleases2017/mainnews...)

Secondary education teachers receive salary increase

July 20, 2017

Thousands of secondary teachers who are members of the Association of Secondary Teachers (ASTI) have received salary increases worth thousands of euro. This follows the trade union's vote to suspend its long-running campaign of industrial action in June 2017. Most union members have seen their annual salaries increase by between €1,796 and €2,500. The union's decision to suspend industrial action paved the way for the restoration of payments which were frozen since the ASTI voted to cease working additional hours.

English: [https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/thousands-of-secondary-teachers ...](https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/thousands-of-secondary-teachers...)

National minimum wage up to 9.55 euro per hour

July 18, 2017

The Low Pay Commission is recommending an increase in the national hourly minimum wage of 30 cents to 9.55 euro. More than 120,000 workers would benefit from the recommendation. A 30 cent per hour rise would be three times the level of increase recommended by the commission in 2016 and accepted by the Government. The 10-cent rise was strongly criticised by trade unions at the time as inadequate.

English: [https://www.djei.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2017/July ...](https://www.djei.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2017/July...)

The report: [http://www.lowpaycommission.ie/publications/national ...](http://www.lowpaycommission.ie/publications/national...)

Construction agreement pilot in new structure of sector agreements

July 15, 2017

The Labour Court concluded its deliberations on an application for a sectoral employment order for the construction industry. The order for the construction sector could bring up the minimum hourly rates for up to 50,000 workers across the construction industry by close to 10%. The report is a key part of the process to strike a new industry-wide sectoral employment order that would set a minimum floor on pay across the construction industry. The construction sector will be the first to have such an order put in place. It replaces the old registered employment agreement (REA) structure, which was struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 2013.

English: [https://www.irishtimes.com/business/work/construction-workers-in-line ...](https://www.irishtimes.com/business/work/construction-workers-in-line...)

Italy

Recovery of the South will take another 10 years

July 29, 2017

A Svimez think tank report points to 20 years of lost growth for the southern regions. The recovery of 2015-2016, confirmed in forecasts for 2017 and 2018, will not structurally change this. With the current economic trends, the Centre-South regions will recover their pre-crisis levels in 2028, that is 10 years after the rest of the country. The labour market is characterised by an explosion of part-time work, above all that which can be defined as 'involuntary', people accepting part-time work due to the lack of full-time work. In 2016, full-time workers (4.9 million) increased by 1% compared to 2015, while part-time workers rose 4.9%: 1.1 million, of which 858,000 are 'involuntary'. Despite the increase in employed people, levels of poverty and social exclusion are still high: 34% of southern Italians are at risk of poverty and 10% face absolute poverty.

English: [http://www.italy24.ilsole24ore.com/art/business-and-economy ...](http://www.italy24.ilsole24ore.com/art/business-and-economy...)

The report (in Italian): [http://www.svimez.info/images/RAPPORTO ...](http://www.svimez.info/images/RAPPORTO...)

Public transport workers against privatisation

July 20, 2017

Public transportation workers in the cities of Rome and Naples went on strike on 20 July 2017 against plans to privatise the sector. The strike convened by several trade union organisations was initially conceived for 24 hours throughout the national territory, but its scope was reduced after negotiations between representatives of trade unions and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation. The most recent of two national public transportation strikes taking place this year occurred on 6 July, also protesting against the eventual privatisation of the sector and in defence of the right to strike, whose limits are currently under discussion in the Senate for essential public services such as transportation.

English: [http://www.plenglish.com/index ...](http://www.plenglish.com/index...)

BT Italia strike looms

July 17, 2017

BT Italia workers have announced a strike over the company's plans to cut 202 jobs. A joint press release from the Slc-cgil, Fistel-cisl and Uilcom-uil unions said a strike will be held by the entire workforce, after the parties failed to reach an agreement following meetings at the employment ministry. BT's troubled Italian unit announced an industrial plan to improve efficiency and identify new growth areas around 8 months after the parent company first revealed financial irregularities at BT Italia.

English: [https://www.telecompaper.com/news/bt-italia-workers-to-strike-over-job-cuts ...](https://www.telecompaper.com/news/bt-italia-workers-to-strike-over-job-cuts...)

Database on agreements online

July 11, 2017

Trade union confederation UIL produced an online archive of collective agreements at decentral level that will be operational from September 2017. The database (DIGIT@UIL) was presented during an event in Rom. The archive provides details about existing local agreements and can be consulted for cross data analysis and comparisons. According to the trade union, these second level agreements are crucial and strategic instruments for the improvement of workers' rights and the redistribution of wealth. Results of the

first analysis are presented in an accompanying information file. Frequently agreed themes are productivity bonuses (in 72% of the sample), industrial relations (68%), wellbeing (59%) and work organisation (56%).

Italian: [http://lavoro.gov.it/notizie/pagine/presentato-oggi ...](http://lavoro.gov.it/notizie/pagine/presentato-oggi...)

[http://www.uil.it/News ...](http://www.uil.it/News...)

First analysis and information about DIGIT@UIL (in Italian): [http://www.uil.it/documents ...](http://www.uil.it/documents...)

Latvia

Physicians continue their strike over pay

July 18, 2017

Over 600 family physicians in Latvia went on a strike on 3 July 2017 and will not be providing any government-funded health care services to their patients until an agreement is reached with the government on their demands. One of the family physicians' demands is to raise the present capitation by 30%. The Latvian Association of Family Physicians rejected the latest deal proposed by the Prime Minister and the Health Minister and will carry on with the strike, but in a different form, considering the situation with their patients. The Association says that nothing has changed and that proposals that had been agreed at a meeting have not been included. Under the agreement proposed by the government, the monthly salary for family physicians would be raised by 150 euro.

English: [https://www.baltictimes.com/family_physicians ...](https://www.baltictimes.com/family_physicians...)

Liechtenstein

Generally binding agreement for plasterers and painters

August 1, 2017

The collective bargaining in the painters and plasterers branch led to an agreement for a period of 3 years. The collective agreement was declared generally binding as of 1 August 2017. Based on the EU posting of workers directive, the agreement refers to a list of provisions that apply for foreign companies with posted workers.

German: [http://www.lanv.li/contortionist ...](http://www.lanv.li/contortionist...)

Lithuania

Labour force and migration

August 10, 2017

Although an immigration boom was recorded this summer 2017, the number of those leaving the country outweighs the arrival numbers. According to the statistics, the majority of the immigrants are returning citizens, however, the numbers of arriving foreigners is also gradually growing. The total population shrank from 3.7 million residents in 1990 to 2.8 million people in 2017 due to emigration and aging. Emigration is spurred by large income inequality; the majority of emigrants changing for Western Europe look for higher wages. In the European semester reform program, special attention is given to reducing emigration.

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

The National Reform Program 2017: [https://ec.europa.eu/info ...](https://ec.europa.eu/info...)

Luxembourg

Wage comparison published

August 4, 2017

The statistical office has worked out a comparison of the sectoral wage developments in the neighbouring countries (Germany, Belgium, France). Much attention was given to the wage dynamic in the private and public sector. Because of the country's large finance sector, the office focused especially on the wage

formation in financial services. One of the findings is that the surrounding countries have no sector in the lead. But, there are important mutual interactions, both short-term and long-term, between sectoral bargaining.

French: <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/fr/publications ...>

<http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications ...>

Report on socio-economic inequalities

July 27, 2017

A Statec report presenting a detailed analysis, reveals significant social and economic inequalities across the country. The percentage of people living on the social minimum wage varies between 0.5 per cent and 8.5 per cent (the national average is 3.6%). While a higher amount of people receives the social minimum wage in the north of Luxembourg as opposed to the southern region, a number of communes are an exception, scoring relatively high, including Luxembourg City, the communes along the German border, as well as certain communes in the cantons of Echternach, Mersch and Redange.

English: <https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/index-statec-report ...>

The report (in French): <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications ...>

OECD economic survey 2017

July 21, 2017

The OECD published its biannual survey with thematic chapters on skills and the integration of migrants. The country's economic performance is robust thanks to its services sector, its fiscal policies and openness to global talent. The pace of job creation is strong and benefits not only residents but also cross-border workers and immigrants. To reduce reliance on the financial industry the government should further develop its long-term strategy focusing on new digital technologies and renewable energy. Supplying the skills needed in new sectors will require further improvements in the education system, with a focus on lifelong learning. Better alignment of skills with labour market needs would entail reorienting labour market policies from supporting job creating towards funding training programmes to facilitate the reallocation of labour.

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

The structure of the economy

July 5, 2017

A report produced by the statistical office provides an updated picture of the country's economic structure. The overview covers Luxembourg-based companies with at least 90 employees as of January 2017, active in a variety of sectors - from construction and the textile industry, to business and the steel industry. The list of the country's largest employers is broken down according to employment size and economic activity.

English: <https://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/employers ...>

The lists (French): <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/fr/actualites/entreprises ...>

<http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications/principales-employeurs ...>

<http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications/principales-employeurs ...>

Malta

Non-compliance with collective agreement at courts

July 10, 2017

Court officers have not received any of the agreed benefits and pay-scale adjustments from a deputy registrar's sectoral collective agreement signed and concluded two months ago. The collective agreement for deputy registrars within the law courts was negotiated between trade union UHM, the Justice Ministry and the court administration. The union is taking action; if no response is given to the union, it will issue a directive to its workers which would see intentional major disruptions, such as workers advised not to answer phones or e-mails, or to do the bare minimum in order to get their message across.

English: <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2017-07-10/local-news ...>

Collective agreement with Gasco Energy signed

July 2, 2017

The General Workers' Union signed a collective agreement for the employees of Gasco Energy Ltd, a leading operator responsible for storage and bottling of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). Through this collective agreement, the employees will benefit from improved employment and salary conditions. This is the second agreement covering a three-year term between the GWU and Gasco Energy. The GWU's secretary for the Chemicals and Energy Section said the agreement showed the appreciation of management to the commitment by the company's employees. Gasco Energy CEO said the collective agreement was based on the satisfactory working conditions already enjoyed by the employees and would guarantee an increase in salaries and other benefits over the next three years.

English: <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles ...>

Netherlands

Primary school teachers created political crisis

August 31, 2017

Primary school teachers organised a one-hour strike in June. They argued that primary school teachers earn between 7% and 21% less despite having to deal with increasing workloads. Teachers warned that further stoppages will be forthcoming unless the government pledges to invest in raising wages. In the following weeks, this led to a political crisis for the outgoing government, as the acting labour minister announced that he was not willing to sign the 2018 budget if the teachers' wages were not increased. A crisis was averted, as the outgoing coalition agreed that a 'substantial amount' will go to teachers' pay in the 2018 budget.

English: <http://nltimes.nl/2017/08/31/cabinet-crisis-averted ...>
<http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/08/sitting-cabinet-could-fall ...>

Industrial action by border control military

August 15, 2017

The *Koninklijke Marechaussee*, a military policing force that is responsible for border security, has initiated working to rule actions in their campaign for an improved collective agreement. As military personnel don't have the right to strike, working to rule is one of their few options to push their employer. The officers work within the margin of applicable laws and rules; this normally causes delays. Talks between the trade unions and the Ministry of Defence reached a deadlock in April, when 90% of union members rejected the Ministry's final offer.

English: <http://nltimes.nl/2017/08/15/schiphol-officers-threaten-labor-actions>

Substantial unpaid overtime found

July 18, 2017

The research institute TNO, commissioned by trade union FNV, published a report on unpaid overtime. One of the conclusion is that employees work, on average, three hours in unpaid overtime. The FNV reacted on the findings and said that employers receive an annual €20bn 'gift' from their staff in the form of unpaid overtime. If unpaid overtime work carried out by the seven million employed in the country was converted into full-time jobs, unemployment would be cut by half.

English: <http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/07/fnv-trade-union ...>
The report in Dutch: <http://www.monitorarbeid.tno.nl/dynamics/modules ...>

Norway

Unions still clash with Norwegian Air

July 11, 2017

Trade union opposition to Norwegian Air International continues. From the moment that the Scandinavian-owned, Irish-registered carrier sought permission to fly to the US, organisations representing aviation pilots and air crew on both sides of the Atlantic, have been claiming that it was bad news for aviation workers. While it now has its foreign air carrier's permit and began flying from Ireland to the US on July 2017, the unions are still bidding to turn the clock back. They have filed a petition with the federal court in Washington arguing that the US Department of Transportation was wrong to grant the airline permission in

the first place. Their case is partly based on Article 17 of the EU-US Air Transport Agreement, which the unions say is meant to ensure that competition in aviation does not undermine workers' pay and conditions.

English: [https://www.irishtimes.com/business/transport-and-tourism/unions-still-aiming ...](https://www.irishtimes.com/business/transport-and-tourism/unions-still-aiming...)

Poland

Retirement age lowered

July 27, 2017

The country's finance minister has said that some 80% of older workers may in October 2017 take advantage of new rights to retire earlier. But, the acting government wants to keep as much as possible the people entitled to retirement on the labour market. From 1 October, women will have the right to retire at 60 and men at 65. The previous government introduced in 2013 a gradual increase of the retirement age to 67 for both men and women.

English: [http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul...)

Union takes a stand against Sunday shopping

July 16, 2017

A trade union leader has rejected calls to relax a proposal to ban shopping throughout the country on Sundays and urged its passage through parliament. He argued that the proposal tabled by the Solidarity union and several other organisations in parliament last year 'has already undergone a far-reaching metamorphosis', and the number of exceptions to a prohibition has since been expanded. The trade union made it absolutely clear that it did not agree to any further concessions.

English: [http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul...)

Portugal

VW workers on strike

August 31, 2017

Workers at a Volkswagen plant went on strike over plans to introduce Saturday shifts. It is the first time in 20 years of operation that the 3,500 employees strike, after a convincing 75% no-vote by ballot against the planned introduction.

English: [http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/workers-strike-at-vw-plant ...](http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/workers-strike-at-vw-plant...)

Telecom workers protest against contracting policy

August 17, 2017

Employees of national telecoms company PT have organised several actions. The PT trade unions said the fight is necessary to avoid a complete catastrophe within the company. A strike action in July involved workers of the various companies within the PT group and was the first in ten years. Employees are protesting against the transferring of workers contracts to service providing companies. A delegation representing employees in which several unions were represented handed in to the cabinet office a document on the situation at the privatised telecommunications company, stressing that some 1,400 jobs have been lost there in the past two years.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/pt-employees-call-on-government ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/pt-employees-call-on-government...)

Trade union joint statements (Portuguese): [http://www.sindetelco.pt/wp-content ...](http://www.sindetelco.pt/wp-content...)

[http://www.sindetelco.pt/wp-content ...](http://www.sindetelco.pt/wp-content...)

Supermarket workers on strike

August 10, 2017

The trade union for supermarket workers at the Dia/Minipreço supermarkets has called for a strike. The union said the workers' action is planned to support accusations by workers of 'salary discrimination and moral harassment' within the company. The unions speak about constant threats of dismissal, attempts to

prevent the reconciliation of family life with work, limitation of the right to strike, abuse of authority and threats of change time schedules and site transfers.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/diaminipreco-supermarket-employees ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/diaminipreco-supermarket-employees...)

Portuguese: [http://www.tvi24.iol.pt/economia/07-08-2017/trabalhadores-do-dia-minipreco ...](http://www.tvi24.iol.pt/economia/07-08-2017/trabalhadores-do-dia-minipreco...)

Back to full wages at BCP bank

July 13, 2017

Workers at the BCP bank who earned more than 1,000 euro have had their wages cut by between 3 percent and 11 percent for the past three years as part of the restructuring package agreed with the EU following the bailout, which also involved closing branches and laying off thousands of workers in a programme involving early retirement and mutual agreement dismissals. The bank has announced that it will start paying its workers their full wages from July 2017 on.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/bcp-to-start-paying-full-wages-again ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/bcp-to-start-paying-full-wages-again...)

Health services nurses slow down

July 6, 2017

Health service's specialist nurses who usually provide specialist services in such areas as maternity and obstetrics wards have been refusing to perform any more than average nursing duties as a form of protest, resulting in some maternity wards being closed down and several others grinding to a halt. The nurses started the action for an indefinite period, in protest over their salaries and lack of recognition for their work. They are being paid wages equal to common nursing services despite providing specialist care.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/health-services-specialist-nurses-protest ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/health-services-specialist-nurses-protest...)

Romania

Threats after complaints on late payment

August 9, 2017

A secret footage that was placed on the Internet reveals how a factory owner verbally threatened his workers after they complained about being paid late. Eleftherios Vanellis – believed to hold dual Cypriot and British citizenship – was secretly filmed at the textile factory Unique Clothing in Paulesti in Prahova county.

English: [https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4207734/british-factory-owner-filmed-swearing ...](https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4207734/british-factory-owner-filmed-swearing...)

Wage data first half of 2017

August 7, 2017

The national statistical office has updated its figures on wages and earnings. As compared to June 2016, the average net nominal earnings increased by 14.5%. The real earnings index in relation with the same period of previous year was 113.5%. In June 2017, the average gross nominal monthly earnings stood at 3313 lei (720 euro). The average net nominal earnings were 2380 lei (517 euro). The best paid jobs can be found in IT and information consultancy, the lowest paid in hospitality and the food sector.

English: [http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default ...](http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default...)

The data set: <http://www.insse.ro/cms/en/content/earnings-1991-monthly-series>

Serbia

Strike at FIAT ends with wage agreement

July 28, 2017

Two thousand striking workers at a Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' (FCA) plant - FCA Srbija - succeeded in gaining a 9.5 per cent pay increase and keeping their annual bonus, amongst other gains, in a deal signed between Fiat and the trade unions on 25 July 2017. The deal follows an unprecedented three weeks of strike action at the factory in Kragujevac, and effective trade union mobilisation which benefitted from the support and solidarity of fellow trade union organisations from all across Europe.

English: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business ...](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business...)

[http://www.industrialunion.org/workers-at-fiat-serbia-win-better-conditions ...](http://www.industrialunion.org/workers-at-fiat-serbia-win-better-conditions...)

Wage and pension increases promised

July 25, 2017

The country's president announced that salaries will increase on a permanent basis and pensions will increase as well, based on a government decision before the end of 2017. This means that there will be a significant increase in salaries and a more significant increase in pensions than in previous years. The president indicated an increase to an average monthly wage of almost 500 euro by the end of 2018.

English: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business ...](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business...)

Railway factory strike

July 4, 2017

Workers from the GOŠA factory have organised a blockade of the international Belgrade-Thessaloniki railway line and the road to the factory. The workers have been on strike for 100 days, after not receiving their salary and benefits for 15 months. The GOŠA factory produces trams and railway carriages. It was one of the most important industrial plants in the former Yugoslavia. In 2007, the plant was privatized and sold to a Slovakian company, ŽOS. Due to the sale, the workers have no clear negotiating partner. Trade unions also hold state institutions – the labour ministry, the ministry of the economy and particularly the finance ministry – responsible for tolerating unpaid taxes by the company for more than a year.

English: [http://www.industrialunion.org/international-unions-join-striking-workers ...](http://www.industrialunion.org/international-unions-join-striking-workers...)

Slovakia

Wages of teachers improve

July 25, 2017

The salaries of teachers are set to rise by 6 percent from 1 September 2017. Further 6-percent increases are planned for September 2018, for September 2019, and by January of 2020. This is the conclusion of the agreement between the government, trade unions and the Association of Cities and Towns of Slovakia. The increase in salaries of employees in nursery schools, primary art schools, free time centres and school clubs will be paid by towns and villages, the rest will come from the Education Ministry. The planned increases will happen only if the trade union of teachers signs a memorandum with the government on refraining from organised strikes. Otherwise the salaries will increase by 6 percent only, from January 2018.

English: [https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20610786/teachers-salaries-to-rise-by-6-percent ...](https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20610786/teachers-salaries-to-rise-by-6-percent...)

Doctors at Dôvera battle for better contracts

July 20, 2017

On 1 July 2017, approximately 2,000 three-month contract notices between doctors and the private health insurer Dôvera began to lapse. Dôvera representatives said that they were willing to negotiate within some conditions, including that the increased payment by the insurer be seen in better-quality services for patients. Doctors insist on requirements for more funding for surgeries and are threatening to terminate their contracts with health insurers. Doctors have fixed-term contracts with health insurers, who pay them for examinations, treatments and other services based on the number of services performed. The Association of Outpatient Medical Workers (ZAP) is also dissatisfied with the contract terms with the state-owned Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa (VŠZP), with whom new contract addendums are currently being negotiated. If negotiations fail, the doctors are also planning to terminate their contracts with VŠZP.

English: [https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20608000/doctors-have-not-reached-agreement ...](https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20608000/doctors-have-not-reached-agreement...)

Slovenia

Public sector workers have a deal

August 9, 2017

A deal reached between the government and public-sector trade unions on pay can be implemented, as enough trade unions signed the agreement, more than a week before the deadline. The law prescribes a signature of at least 22 out of 41 representative unions; 24 unions signed by early August. The deal, reached in July after months of negotiations, involves 71.4m euro to be spent on wages annually, of which 26.6m euro to increase the wages of the lowest paid workers such as cleaners, janitors and cooks, who earn below the minimum wage. A new round of talks is necessary for public workers not yet covered.

English: <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/public-sector-pay-deal-becomes-valid>

Spain

Security staff at airport strikes

August 14, 2017

Security staff at the Barcelona airport started with rolling strikes over low pay and poor conditions. An emergency meeting between the strike committee and Eulen, the security contractor, failed to reach an agreement, although both sides claimed it 'had gone well'. The airport was partly privatised in February 2015 and unions say that standards have fallen as the company tries to increase shareholder value. Workers have rejected a new deal offered by the regional Catalanian government and have called an indefinite strike. The workers say that understaffing and a basic monthly salary of 900-1,100 euro forces them to work overtime. The trade unions that call for pay increases and the hiring of additional staff, have announced more industrial action on other airports in September.

English: [https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/08/16/inenglish ...](https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/08/16/inenglish...)
[https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/08/14/inenglish ...](https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/08/14/inenglish...)
[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/04/barcelona ...](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/04/barcelona...)

Low-pay and precarity in tourism

July 31, 2017

A Global Labour Column sketches out the problems in the tourism sector. Tourism work is tough and poorly paid, working conditions have deteriorated significantly, especially for hotel housekeepers. Hoteliers have taken advantage of the crisis to increase workloads, reduce wages, make contracts more insecure, and outsource. As a result of labour fragmentation, wages have dropped dramatically and many hotel cleaners have become 'working poor'. Hotel housekeepers have been heavily squeezed; they are one of the largest groups among hotel staff, representing between 20 and 30% of employees. They are mostly female, suffering from multiple forms of discrimination.

English: [http://column.global-labour-university.org/2017/07/confronting-job-precarity ...](http://column.global-labour-university.org/2017/07/confronting-job-precarity...)

Dockworkers end strike after reaching deal

July 3, 2017

After months of tough negotiations, unionised longshore workers and their employers have settled a dispute over a recently passed law that the workers have said could cost thousands of them their jobs. Unions and employers had been battling over reforms that the parliament approved in May 2017 regarding the hiring of longshore workers. The legislation rules that port loading services were opened to market competition, with companies being allowed to freely hire non-union labour. In a joint statement, the two sides indicated that a collective agreement has been reached that preserves about 6,200 union dockworker jobs. ANESCO, the employers' association, has pledged not to alter working conditions for longshore workers during a three-year period, after which the work scheme that the legislature approved goes fully into effect.

English: [http://www.americanshipper.com/main/news/spanish-dockworkers-end-strike ...](http://www.americanshipper.com/main/news/spanish-dockworkers-end-strike...)

Sweden

Unions defend bargaining model

August 15, 2017

The trade union confederations have fiercely criticised a proposal from the opposition in parliament to introduce a new form of employment. The opposition Alliance came with the proposal to combine work with training and education, to a lower cost for the employers. The government joined the trade union criticism,

by stating that an introduction by legislation is not the way forward. This could undermine a fundamental labour market principle, with wage negotiations being carried out between the employers' organisation and the trade unions.

English: [http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel ...](http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel...)

Portal of rules and regulation to avoid exploitation

July 13, 2017

Trade union Unionen is adapting to the changing labour market with an online portal that could serve as a model for others. It is an answer to the growing need of self-employed workers of representation and a more orderly web-based system of rules and regulations to avoid exploitation. Unionen calls on other trade unions to adapt and integrate those workers or else lose an opportunity to play a vital role in the digital revolution. Both workers and employers can benefit from collective bargaining and regulation. Such a platform should not give a competitive advantage to 'analogue' firms through social dumping and 'unloading risks' on the self-employed.

English: [https://www.equaltimes.org/can-a-new-nordic-online-portal ...](https://www.equaltimes.org/can-a-new-nordic-online-portal...)

[https://unionenopinion.se/blogg/dawn-platform ...](https://unionenopinion.se/blogg/dawn-platform...)

Waste collectors walk out

July 12, 2017

Around 65 waste collectors in Stockholm quit their jobs, a week after they first walked out in a pay dispute and row over keys. The discontent has erupted into a full-blown row when the company Reno Norden attempted to collect all keys to waste trucks and stations in Stockholm to create a digital key register during the strike. According to waste collectors, the move makes it easier for their employers to fire them. Waste collectors working for another firm, Liselotte Lööf, also walked out in solidarity. The strike, which is set to go before the Swedish Labour Court, is not officially backed by the Transport workers' union, however its representatives are involved in trying to reach a settlement.

English: [https://www.thelocal.se/20170712/stockholm-waste-collectors-resign ...](https://www.thelocal.se/20170712/stockholm-waste-collectors-resign...)

Switzerland

Uber suspends activities in Zurich

August 10, 2017

The car-share firm Uber has abandoned its cheap UberPop service in the city of Zurich after increasing controversy over the fact that its drivers do not have a professional licence. The app-based ride-share service essentially allows anyone to become a taxi driver with an own car. Drivers must be over 21 and own a car with four doors, but they need not be a professional taxi driver. But the legality of the service has long been questioned. In June, Zurich's government said that any driver who does not have a taxi permit is operating illegally and should be fined. Trade union Unia hailed Uber's decision to withdraw the service from Zurich as a 'partial victory'. Unia continues its fight in other cities, like Basel, that still tolerate the Uber services.

English: <https://www.thelocal.ch/20170810/uber-cancels-low-cost-uberpop-service-in-zurich>

Union reaction (German): [https://www.unia.ch/de/aktuell ...](https://www.unia.ch/de/aktuell...)

Union reaction (French): [https://www.unia.ch/fr/actualites ...](https://www.unia.ch/fr/actualites...)

First canton with statutory minimum wage

August 7, 2017

The canton of Neuchâtel can go ahead with plans to introduce a minimum wage after the country's highest court rejected an appeal by opponents of the idea. The people of Neuchâtel voted in favour of bringing in a minimum wage back in 2011, and the cantonal government later decided on an hourly rate of 20 francs. The introduction was suspended after several professional organisations and private individuals challenged the plan in court. The Swiss Federal Court in Lausanne rejected the appeal, saying that the proposed minimum wage of 20 francs 'conforms to the constitutional principle of economic freedom and to federal law'.

English: [https://www.thelocal.ch/20170807/neuchatel-to-become-first-swiss-canton ...](https://www.thelocal.ch/20170807/neuchatel-to-become-first-swiss-canton...)

The Court's communication (in French): [http://www.bger.ch/fr/press-news ...](http://www.bger.ch/fr/press-news...)

Turkey

Talks on public workers pay failed

August 29, 2017

Discussions between trade unions and the government over pay rises for millions of civil servants and retired civil servants for 2018 and 2019 began on 1 August. The labour ministry chaired the meeting where wage rise proposals by public workers trade unions were discussed for around 3.2 million public officers and 1.9 million retired officials in the country. However, the negotiators could not reach an agreement. The final and non-negotiable government's offer was a 3.5% pay increase for the first six months of 2018 and another 3.5% for the remaining six months of 2018. The government offered a 4% rise for the first six months of 2019 and a 5% rise for the remaining six months. The Memur-Sen union wanted a 10% increase in the first half of 2018, combined with 6% in the second half of 2018, 10% in the first half of 2019 and 8% in the second half of 2019. Trade union KESK was looking for a fixed sum for all public workers (at least 3,450 Turkish Liras).

English: [http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/union-rejects-governments-final-offer ...](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/union-rejects-governments-final-offer...)

United Kingdom

McDonalds workers vote to strike

August 21, 2017

McDonald's employees voted to strike in what would be the first industrial action taken against the fast-food chain. Staff at restaurants in Cambridge and in Crayford, south-east London, voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike amid concerns over working conditions and the use of zero-hour contracts. The Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union said workers were demanding an hourly wage of at least £10 and more secure working hours alongside the recognition of the right to form a trade union as employees of the company. The workers coordinate with allies around the world.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/21/mcdonalds-workers ...](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/21/mcdonalds-workers...)
[https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/18/mcdonalds-employees-vote ...](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/aug/18/mcdonalds-employees-vote...)

Annual list with underpayment of workers

August 16, 2017

Around 230 employers have been named for underpaying their workers the National Minimum or Living Wage. This will lead to a record of £2 million back pay for 13,000 of the country's lowest paid workers. As well as paying back staff the money owed, employers on the list have been fined a record £1.9 million by the government. Retail, hairdressing and hospitality businesses were among the most prolific offenders. The link leads also to an excel sheet with all 233 businesses that underpaid workers

English: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/record-2-million-back-pay-identified ...](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/record-2-million-back-pay-identified...)

Income inequality documented

August 11, 2017

The Institute for Fiscal Studies has published the main findings of its research on inequality in a report: 'Living standards, poverty and inequality: 2017'. The report includes findings on changes in inequalities between and within regions (Section 1), and what can be learnt about changes in income and the persistence of low income by examining data that follows the same people over time (Section 2). In another report, the Institute explores the intergenerational income persistence. The adult pay gap between those born into wealthier families and those from less well-off parents is widening. The average weekly income of a 42-year-old male in 2012 whose parents were in the top quintile of earners when they were 16 was around £1,300 in today's money, versus £680 for those whose parents were in the bottom quintile of earners, a gap of 88%. A 42-year-old in 2000 from a top quintile income background had an average income (again in today's money) of around £1,000 versus a bottom quintile income background of £720, a gap of 47%.

English: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9541>
<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9584>

The report on living standards and inequality: [https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/comms ...](https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/comms...)

The report on intergenerational income gaps: [https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/wps ...](https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/wps...)

Webpage with related publications: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9540>

First Bank of England strike in 50 years

August 3, 2017

Workers of the Bank of England began a three-day strike, after talks at the conciliation service Acas ended without agreement. The workers, organised in the Unite trade union are disputing a below-inflation pay rise of 1%, which has been imposed. The trade union members, including cleaners, security and maintenance staff, picketed the Bank's headquarters in the City of London. Unite has called on the governor of the bank, to personally intervene to settle this long-running dispute for the sake of the stability of the bank and the interests of its committed workforce.

English: [http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/bank-of-england-staff ...](http://www.unitetheunion.org/news/bank-of-england-staff...)

[http://www.bbc.com/news/business ...](http://www.bbc.com/news/business...)

YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch ...](https://www.youtube.com/watch...)

Lifting of 1% pay cap for Scottish public workers

July 28, 2017

Campaigning by PCS and other public-sector trade unions has led the Scottish Government to announce that it will remove the 1% pay cap from 2018. The minister with responsibility for Scottish Government pay policy, has also agreed to allow employers to bring all pay settlement dates forward to 1 April 2018. This will mean earlier pay rises in 2018 for thousands of PCS members in the Scottish Government sector.

English: [http://www.pcs.org.uk/news/union-campaigning-leads-scottish-government ...](http://www.pcs.org.uk/news/union-campaigning-leads-scottish-government...)

Court rules that employment tribunal fees are unlawful

July 26, 2017

Following UNISON's legal challenge, the Supreme Court has ruled that employment tribunal fees are unlawful because they price workers out of accessing justice and discriminate against women. Supreme Court rules that employment tribunal fees have unfair effect on access to justice. According to unions, this ruling is a massive step towards ensuring that working people can enforce their employment rights.

English: <http://touchstoneblog.org.uk/2017/07/employment-tribunal-fees-found-unlawful/>

UNISON story: [https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2017/08/employment-tribunal-fees ...](https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2017/08/employment-tribunal-fees...)

The ruling: [https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases ...](https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases...)

Minimum wage and self-employed

July 4, 2017

The Resolution Foundation comes up with a briefing on the issue of minimum wages and self-employed. The minimum wage protects workers at the lower end of the labour market. But, self-employed – now one in seven of the workforce – are not entitled to the minimum wage. The briefing states that a minimum wage would not be appropriate for the majority of the self-employed. However, for those who take work from firms or platforms and – crucially – don't have control over the price they charge, moves to reduce exploitatively low pay would be both meaningful and welcome.

English: [http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/the-minimum-required ...](http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/the-minimum-required...)

The briefing: [http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads ...](http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads...)

For more information, please contact Jan Cremers or Nuria Ramos Martin, 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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