

# collective bargaining

Issue 3/2017 March

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



etui.

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## **European sources**

**Income inequality and the great recession**

March 21, 2017

In a comprehensive study for Eurofound, income inequalities were mapped from a truly EU-wide perspective (2004-2013). EU-wide income inequality declined notably prior to 2008, driven by a strong process of income convergence between European countries. The Great Recession broke this trend. After 2008, income convergence has been sluggish, while inequality within many countries has increased significantly. Two main insights emerge regarding income disparities. One, income disparities between countries are evidenced by the different positions of countries, with Eastern European countries (and Mediterranean countries to a lesser extent) being much more present in the bottom income quintile, while EU15 countries account for almost all the people found in the top quintile. Two, there is also a significant overlap in national income distributions (the countries dominating the top quintile also have a significant share of population in the lowest income quintile), showing that income disparities within countries are larger than income disparities between countries in the EU.

English: <https://www.socialeurope.eu/2017/03/eu-income-inequality-great-recession/>

The report: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default ...>

### **Transport unions campaign for better working conditions at Ikea**

March 15, 2017

For over two years, trade unions affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), have been talking to the multinational retailer, Ikea, about their concerns over the company's supply chain; specifically, about the exploitation of workers in European transport companies subcontracted to deliver goods for Ikea. Ikea has consistently refused trade union offers to work together to find a solution and has clearly refused to take responsibility for the gross exploitation of its delivery drivers. The BBC interviewed drivers from Eastern European countries who are paid €3 an hour while working in affluent nations like Denmark and Germany.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-39196056>

### **Employment report 2017**

March 14, 2017

The EPSCO Council adopted the 2017 Joint Employment Report (JER). The Joint Employment Report takes a snapshot of the employment and social situation across the EU, and highlights the extent of reforms carried out in the Member States over 2016. The Scoreboard allows for the early detection of key employment and social problems and for the assessment of convergence or divergence patterns across countries. Five Member States (Greece, Cyprus, Portugal, Spain and Italy) face a number of critical employment and social challenges, even though Cyprus, Portugal and Spain have seen significant improvements in recent years. Five other Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania) are flagged more than once for having 'critical situations', with varying degrees of severity in terms of their challenges. Some Member States (Austria, Slovakia, Finland, Estonia, France, Belgium, Ireland and Poland) face more specific challenges, usually in only one of the considered employment or social domains.

English: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc ...>

### **Workers in 7 countries worse off**

March 13, 2017

Workers are still not feeling economic recovery: wages are lower now than they were eight years ago in seven EU member states, according to research published today by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). The research also shows that in 18 EU countries wages have grown much slower over the seven years after the crisis than in the eight years before that. In the 7 years 2009-2016 real wages (adjusted for inflation) have fallen every year by an average of 3.1 % in Greece; 1 % in Croatia; 0.9 % in Hungary; 0.7 % in Portugal; 0.6 % in Cyprus; 0.4 % in UK, and 0.3 % in Italy. The findings are contained in 'Benchmarking Working Europe 2017' published by the ETUI and ETUC.

English: <https://www.etuc.org/press/workers-7-eu-countries-worse-today-8-years-ago ...>

The report: <http://www.etui.org/Publications2/Books/Benchmarking-Working-Europe-2017>

### **Agreement on active ageing**

March 8, 2017

The partners in the European Social Dialogue reached an agreement on active ageing that was signed during a meeting of the Tripartite Social Summit. BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and the ETUC (and liaison

committee EUROCADRES/CEC), had agreed in their 2015-2017 Work Programme to negotiate an autonomous framework agreement on active ageing and an inter-generational approach. The concluded framework agreement constitutes the contribution of the social partners to the EU policies (including non-discrimination legislation) and actions which have already been developed to support active ageing and the intergenerational approach. This agreement aims to build upon and enhance the existing measures and approaches that are in place in different contexts across Europe. It outlines tools/measures to be taken into account by social partners and/or HR managers in the context of national demographic and labour market realities, in accordance with national practices and procedures specific to management and labour.

English: [https://www.etuc.org/press/eu-social-partners-sign-agreement-active-ageing ...](https://www.etuc.org/press/eu-social-partners-sign-agreement-active-ageing...)

The agreement: [https://www.etuc.org/sites/www.etuc.org/files/press-release ...](https://www.etuc.org/sites/www.etuc.org/files/press-release...)

### **Gender gap at managerial level**

*March 6, 2017*

According to a report on the number of female managers in the EU by the European Union's statistical office, Latvia came in first place with more than 50 percent women-managers, while in Bulgaria and Poland about 44 percent of managerial roles are held by women. Rounding out the top ten of 28 EU countries and all with at least 40 percent of women-managers were Ireland, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, France and Sweden. At the bottom of the ranking, all with less than a quarter female representation in managerial positions, were Germany, Italy, Cyprus, Belgium, Austria and Luxembourg, while the EU average was 35 percent. At the top of the pay gap between male and female managers was Romania, with just a five percent difference, followed by Slovenia (12.4%), Belgium (13.6%) and Bulgaria (15.0%).

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

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## **Austria**

### **Annual report of the Chamber of Labour**

*March 24, 2017*

The Chamber of Labour made an assessment of the work in 2016 and discussed the outlook for 2017. The Chamber that looks after the interest of all workers is highly praised by the workforce (75% of the workers believes that the Chamber is a reliable organisation). The Chamber earned in court cases around 234-million-euro compensation for workers and another 38 million euro outside the court. The Chamber also has campaigned against social and wage dumping. Priorities for the future are the reduction of unemployment, a reform of the tax system and improvement of social housing.

German: [https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/service/presse/Leistungsbilanz\\_2016.html](https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/service/presse/Leistungsbilanz_2016.html)

Pamphlet (in German): [https://media.arbeiterkammer.at/wien/PDF ...](https://media.arbeiterkammer.at/wien/PDF...)

### **127 jobs to be lost in Nestle-Linz plant**

*March 11, 2017*

Swiss food group Nestle plans to close its plant in Linz, by March 2018. The management said that employees' representatives will be consulted on the consequences for the 127 members of the staff affected. Nestle currently employs around 1,000 workers at 16 sites in Austria. The factory in Linz specialised in products for its business to business division.

English: [http://www.euronews.com/2017/03/07/nestle-to-close-linz-plant ...](http://www.euronews.com/2017/03/07/nestle-to-close-linz-plant...)

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## **Belgium**

### **Social dumping in transport sector**

*March 20, 2017*

Transport companies keep finding ways to escape social legislation. Instead of starting a fake company abroad, they start a real one - it's easier than one would think. When a transport company first sets up a business in, for example, Slovakia, and next hires a Romanian driver to do the driving (mainly on Belgian roads, or in some cases even permanently in Belgium, a witness said), this is a lot cheaper than doing this the 'normal' way via Belgium. This is because social contributions and wages are a lot lower in eastern Europe.

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

### **Delhaize workers on strike**

*March 17, 2017*

Workers in four Delhaize hypermarkets, in the Brussels area have spontaneously stopped work. The CNE (the French-speaking retail and service sector trade union) has stated that employees from the retailer are protesting against the effects of the 2014 restructuring plan. Of particular concern is the management of the restructuring plan decided in June 2014. This anticipated shedding the jobs of some 1,800 colleagues. Workers are asking for employment structural reinforcement, which does not include intermittent arrangements involving fixed term contracts or student contracts.

English: [http://www.brusselstimes.com/brussels/7776/spontaneous-strike-action ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/brussels/7776/spontaneous-strike-action...)

### **Workers lose nearly 1% of their purchasing power in 2016**

*March 14, 2017*

The General Confederation of Liberal Trade Unions of Belgium (CGSLB) published data, which reveal that workers lost 0.94% of their purchasing power in 2016. The country appears to be the only country in Europe, in which workers were able to buy less with their pay (e.g. German and Dutch wages rose respectively by 1.6% and 2.2%). The Michel government had decided on an increase in the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) which prevented the increase in wages and salaries adapting to the cost of living, according to the CGSLB.

English: [http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/7746/belgian-workers-lose-nearly-1 ...](http://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/7746/belgian-workers-lose-nearly-1...)

### **Bombardier will not close Bruges plant**

*March 4, 2017*

Workers representatives were told during a meeting of the European Works Council of Bombardier that the Bruges plant will not be closed. However, concerns remain about serious job losses. The Bruges branch will have its headquarters in Crespin, in France. Dozens of white collar jobs are at stake. Questions also remain about the production unit after 2018, when Bombardier Bruges will be more dependent on local orders.

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

French: [http://www.lesoir.be/1452315/article/economie/2017-03-03/1-usine-bombardier ...](http://www.lesoir.be/1452315/article/economie/2017-03-03/1-usine-bombardier...)

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## **Bulgaria**

### **Labour costs growth documented**

*March 20, 2017*

In the fourth quarter of 2016, the total labour costs per working hour increased by 8%, compared to a year ago, showed preliminary data of the National Statistical Institute (NSI). The increase in industry is 8.1%, in the services sector – 9.4% and in construction 2.2%. The greatest jump in total labour costs was reported for the sectors Culture, Sports and Entertainment – 25.5%, Trade, Automobile and Motorcycle Repairs – 14.3%, Creation and Circulation of Information and Artistic Products, Telecommunications – 10.7%. Labour costs grew least in the Water and Sewerage Sector – 1.7%, Construction – 2.2% and Education – 3.0%.

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

Statistical bulletin with detailed figures: [http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default ...](http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default...)

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## **Croatia**

### **Union worried about lack of wage growth**

*March 13, 2017*

The federation of independent trade unions commented the outcome of the wage data research published by the ETUC/ETUI (see elsewhere in this Newsletter). Although the country's GDP is growing substantially faster than in recent years, workers still have lower wages than 8 years ago. According to the union, it is high time that workers receive higher wages. An increasing share of workers is trapped in jobs with atypical contracts and low income. They are at risk of poverty even though they are employed.

English: <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/business/17431-despite-gdp-growth ...>

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## Cyprus

### **Dispute over nurses' wages solved**

*March 3, 2017*

The Minister of Health announced that the government has granted state nurses their long-standing demand for higher entry-level wages to match their university level qualifications. The agreement was achieved during a meeting with delegations of the nurses' union Pasyno and the nurses' branch of the civil servants' trade union Pasydy. The demand of the state nurses to be paid higher wages to match their university level qualifications, was put forward in 2011. The administration's reluctance in granting this request citing financial issues, led in the past to a number of strikes by nurses in state hospitals.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/03/03/govt-agrees-higher-entry-level ...>

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## Czech Republic

### **Several public-sector workers will have better pay**

*March 30, 2017*

The government agreed on an increase in the salaries of the police, firefighters, customs officers and prison wardens by 10% as of July 2017. The police corps has roughly 40,000 employees and the fire corps over 9,700. The average monthly salary is about 35,000 crowns (1295 euro) in both services. The pay rise will also cover the customs and prison authorities as well as secret services.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2017/03/30/police-officers-firefighters ...>

### **Hyundai workers conclude 12% pay increase**

*March 28, 2017*

Workers of the second-biggest carmaker in the Republic, Hyundai, will get a pay rise of around 12 percent, a company's spokesman announced. The deal is part of a collective agreement signed by the trade unions and representatives of the company's management. In 2016, blue collar workers in Hyundai made on average 34,500 crowns (1276 euro). The average wage in the Moravian-Silesian region, where the plant is located, was around 25,200 crowns in 2016.

English: <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/news/czech-hyundai-workers-to-get-12-percent ...>

### **Education workers insist on higher wages**

*March 1, 2017*

The education trade union embarked on the second stage of its 'End of Cheap Teachers campaign', which was launched in 2016. The unionists insist on a considerable increase of the salaries of teachers as well as non-teaching employees in the education. Their demand was partly met in 2016 when they received an 8% increase.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2017/03/01/czech-education-trade-union-insisting ...>

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## Denmark

### **Uber leaves the country after taxi regulation**

*March 29, 2017*

Uber will shut down its operation following the introduction of new taxi laws. As has happened elsewhere in Europe, taxi driver unions, cab operators and politicians have argued that Uber does not comply with the legal standards for established taxi firms and its service represents unfair competition. Prosecutors accused the company of operating an illegal taxi service, indicting it on charges of assisting its drivers – two of whom have also been fined – in breaking applicable national taxi laws. Trade unions stated that Uber knew from



the start of its operations in 2014 that its business model was illegal under the country's existing laws.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/mar/28/uber-to-shut-down ...](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/mar/28/uber-to-shut-down...)  
[http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2017/march/itf-and-unions-cheer ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2017/march/itf-and-unions-cheer...)

### **Dialogue at Maersk satisfactory**

*March 28, 2017*

Representatives from ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) trade unions committed to continued dialogue with AP Møller-Mærsk at the company's AGM. The delegation informed the AGM of research that has been carried out amongst ITF affiliates worldwide on AP Møller Maersk corporate social responsibility policies. The research covered transport workers employed on ships, tugs and in ports. The research found that in many Maersk workplaces positive dialogue and industrial relations exist. However, there are still serious challenges in certain areas, in particular with regards to union recognition, and work is therefore needed to share best practice around all the regions of the world.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/press-releases/2017/march/itf-delivers ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/press-releases/2017/march/itf-delivers...)

### **Thousands of jobs lost at postal service**

*March 9, 2017*

The national postal service Postnord wants to reduce mail delivery to once per week and has announced it intends to let go of upwards of 4,000 employees – roughly 40 percent of its entire Danish staff – in a bid to streamline its flailing economy. Furthermore, the service wants politicians in Denmark and Sweden, the other co-owner of Postnord, to cough up 2.3 billion kroner to help bail them out and make the transition.

English: [http://cphpost.dk/news/business/dire-postal-service-situation-thousands ...](http://cphpost.dk/news/business/dire-postal-service-situation-thousands...)

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## **Estonia**

### **Telia collective agreement is a good example**

*March 5, 2017*

The collective agreement reached between the telecommunications company Telia Eesti and the Estonian Communication and Service Workers' Trade Union (ESTAL) should serve as a good example of social dialogue for others to follow, the ESTAL said. Under the agreement, the employer pays all its full-time employees two times the national minimum wage.

English: [http://www.baltictimes.com/estonia\\_\\_union\\_says\\_telia\\_collective\\_agreement ...](http://www.baltictimes.com/estonia__union_says_telia_collective_agreement...)

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## **Finland**

### **Risk of poverty among youngsters**

*March 29, 2017*

A Turku University professor stated that a degree is no guarantee for work, and high living costs aggravate the situation further. Especially millennials continue to struggle. Statistics Finland reports that more than one in four 18–24-year-olds are poor, or have low income. Poverty among young adults aged 25-34 has increased the most out of all age groups, by 17 percent compared with pensioners between 2008 and 2015. A third of these are students, another third unemployed.

English: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/millennial\\_poverty\\_on\\_the\\_rise ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/millennial_poverty_on_the_rise...)

### **Employers insist on termination of bargaining tradition**

*March 21, 2017*

The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) stated that, in the longer run, it would be for the best if all terms of work were agreed individually at company level between employer and employee. The statement comes fast on the heels of the employers' EK announcement that it will do no longer enter into agreements with the trade union confederations. It has also pulled out of the 22 existing confederation level agreements.



English: [http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1221-employers ...](http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1221-employers-...)  
[http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1207-employers-confederation ...](http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland/1207-employers-confederation-...)

### **Ground personnel strike leads to deal**

*March 20, 2017*

A planned strike by ground personnel at the national airports was first called off. But shortly after the negotiations between air workers and employer representatives failed as the trade unions rejected the proposed settlement. New negotiations between the aviation employees' trade union IAU and business representatives led to a deal on airport workers' wages and benefits after a final, 30-hour round of negotiations. The National Conciliator said the parties reached a three-year deal giving collective agreement contracts to service workers in the two biggest airports, Helsinki and the northern city of Oulu.

English: [http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-finland-airport-strike ...](http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-finland-airport-strike-...)  
[http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/aviation\\_workers\\_strike\\_cripples\\_helsinki\\_airport ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/aviation_workers_strike_cripples_helsinki_airport-...)

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## **France**

### **Agreement reached for 'umbrella work' employees**

*March 23, 2017*

The joint trade unions and the employers in the umbrella work branch, represented by the PEPS, came to an agreement. Umbrella work (or 'portage salarial') was defined in 2015 in a law. The umbrella company employs a worker, pays him a salary and invoices his clients. The company takes responsibility for the administration of the work and services the employee has negotiated. The deal settles how labour rules have to be applied to this atypical form of employment, in order to provide legal security for companies, and contains provisions to safeguard workers employed under such arrangements. This historic agreement, carried out in four months with all relevant social partners, includes several important provisions, such as the setting up of a mutual fund for the protection of workers and the creation of a personal reserve that can be used by the worker, in the event of a period of inactivity (10% of the remuneration).

English: [http://www.peps-syndicat.fr/presse-et-institutions/presse/le-peps-et-les-syndicats ...](http://www.peps-syndicat.fr/presse-et-institutions/presse/le-peps-et-les-syndicats-...)

### **EDF strike against job cuts**

*March 20, 2017*

Workers at EDF were on a 24 hours' strike. The notice of the latest EDF action comes as trade unions representing professionals in the energy industry called for a national action. The call to strike comes against the backdrop of a proposal to freeze the national base salary in 2017. The FNME CGT calls on all the staff to strike demanding the reopening of negotiations on the national basic salary, and an end to job cuts.

English: [http://www.platts.com/latest-news/electric-power/london/workers-at-frances-edf ...](http://www.platts.com/latest-news/electric-power/london/workers-at-frances-edf-...)

### **Louvre security staff on strike**

*March 9, 2017*

The security staff of the Louvre went on strike in protest of the dysfunctional management of crowds flocking to the museum's new Johannes Vermeer exhibition. Since opening last month, the exhibition has drawn record numbers of visitors, including more than 9,000 people on its first day. The crowds overwhelmed the museum's new special exhibitions infrastructure and caused bottlenecks throughout the museum. In a letter to Louvre President, the secretary general of the trade union that represents many of the museum workers, said that Louvre security staff 'are suffering constant physical and verbal aggression'. The letter places blame for the tense situation squarely on the Louvre administration, stating that 'the mediocre management of fluctuating crowds and reservations' is posing major psycho-social risks to workers.

English: [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/09/arts/design/vermeer-louvre ...](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/09/arts/design/vermeer-louvre-...)

### **Air traffic control on strike**

*March 5, 2017*

Air traffic control union UNSA has announced a four-day strike, which has delayed (or even led to cancelling) up to a third of flights in Paris and around France. Air traffic controllers working at airports in Brest, Bordeaux and Aix-en-Provence failed to agree in negotiations on working hours and other conditions.

The unions criticised the General Directorate of Civil Aviation (DGAC), who wants to go from a system of six days worked every 12 days to seven every 12 days.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/international/march-6-10-french-strike-threatens ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/international/march-6-10-french-strike-threatens...)

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## Germany

### Legislation on gender pay

*March 30, 2017*

Women actually receive around 20% lower pay as men. With the transparency legislation that was adopted in parliament, the government has formulated an information right to workers in companies about the wage policy and the applied differences between workers. The law specifies varying obligations for companies depending on the size of the workforce. With the aim to reduce the existing wage gap between men and women, the bill introduces the opportunity for workers to lodge a complaint and demand higher pay. The draft law was not received with high enthusiasm and criticism came from both sides, industry and consultants that were of the opinion that this was not necessary and trade unions that saw it as a paper tiger.

German: [http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/loehne-gerechtigkeit-durch-transparenz ...](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/loehne-gerechtigkeit-durch-transparenz...)

[http://www.dgb.de/presse ...](http://www.dgb.de/presse...)

[https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft ...](https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft...)

English (older description): [http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/germany ...](http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/germany...)

### Pay deal for ground staff

*March 28, 2017*

Trade union Ver.di has agreed a three-year pay deal for its 2,000 workers at Berlin's airports, ending the threat of further strikes after industrial action caused the cancellation of some 2,000 flights in recent weeks. Trade union Ver.di had asked for an increase in pay for ground staff to 12 euro an hour from about 11 euros as part of a one-year collective agreement. Management first offered about 10 cents more an hour over four years and then improved that offer to an 8 percent increase over three years. The pay deal, achieved after mediation, envisages a 14 percent rise over three years in several steps, and an increase in the hourly wage as well as improvements in workers' contracts, Verdi said in a statement.

English: [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news ...](http://www.novinite.com/view_news...)

[http://gulffnews.com/business/aviation/berlin-airport-strikes-660-flights-cancelled ...](http://gulffnews.com/business/aviation/berlin-airport-strikes-660-flights-cancelled...)

### Steel workers reach 4% pay increase

*March 17, 2017*

Around 72,000 steel workers will get a 2.3 percent pay hike from April 2017, and another 1.7 percent from next May in a deal reached for steelworkers in north-western Germany after a third round of negotiations in the western city of Düsseldorf between employers' group Arbeitgeberverband Stahl and trade union IG Metall. IG Metall had called for employees at firms in the steel sector to get 4.5 percent more pay over the course of 12 months. Employers had only offered a 1.3 percent rise during the first round of negotiations but thousands of steel workers have since exerted pressure by carrying out warning strikes.

English: [http://www.dw.com/en/german-steelworkers-strike-benchmark-pay-deal ...](http://www.dw.com/en/german-steelworkers-strike-benchmark-pay-deal...)

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## Greece

### Agreement at central level concluded

*March 31, 2017*

The employer associations and the General Confederation of Employees of Greece (GSEE), the country's largest umbrella trade union organisation, reached agreement on a new national general collective labour agreement for 2017. They agreed on the need to sign a general collective agreement with the same terms as those in previous years, both to protect the rights arising from these and ensure the continued existence of a minimum legal framework for low-paid private-sector workers. All terms introduced by the former collective agreements will continue to apply, i.e. the provisions on the three-year wage maturation periods, the marriage allowance, the Christmas and Easter allowance, the terms on motherhood, fatherhood and one-parent family protection, including all terms that are meant to protect working parents. The provisions on

the 40-hour work will continue to apply, along with the provisions on vulnerable workers. The agreement also includes clauses concerning health and safety at work, undeclared employment, and discrimination, racism and intolerance.

English: <http://int.ert.gr/new-national-general-collective-agreement-signed/>  
[http://www.amna.gr/english/article/17769/Greek-employers--trade-unions-agree ...](http://www.amna.gr/english/article/17769/Greek-employers--trade-unions-agree...)

### **Retail workers deserve better agreement**

*March 17, 2017*

The Athens Retail Workers' Union issued a statement denouncing the draft employment contract presented by the multinational fashion store company H&M. The union accuses the retail company of trying to impose an agreement which further reduces workers' rights. Specifically, the union points out at certain parts of the contract that obliges employees to work at any branch the company decides at any given time, increases working hours through 'flexibility' provisions and imposes a set of internal regulations, threatening employees with penalties, or even laying off, if they don't comply. Moreover, the proposed agreement makes it easy for the employer to reduce salaries and dismiss employees. The union statement calls for H&M employees to refrain from signing the contract and join the H&M Fight committee in their quest for a reinstatement of collective bargaining.

English: [http://neoskosmos.com/news/en/Retail-workers-union-stands-up ...](http://neoskosmos.com/news/en/Retail-workers-union-stands-up...)

### **Report studies bargaining**

*March 16, 2017*

According to a report, published by the trade union confederation GSEE, the country is characterised by a two-speed labour market. Employees in the wider public sector enjoy, on average, higher wages and salaries than their counterparts in the private sector. According to the study, the labour market also shows over the crisis years the dominance of company-wide agreement instead of the previously dominant sector-wide collective agreements achieved through mandatory collective bargaining. Additionally, the expansion of part-time employment is also noteworthy. Additionally, according to the study, only 10 sector level collective agreements were signed in 2016.

English: [http://www.tornosnews.gr/en/greek-news/economy/23913-public-sector-employees ...](http://www.tornosnews.gr/en/greek-news/economy/23913-public-sector-employees...)

### **Archaeological guards warn of further strike action**

*March 1, 2017*

A meeting between the trade union representing state guards at the archaeological sites and the culture minister, following the guards' strike on 20 February 2017, has failed to resolve a pay and contract dispute between the parties. In a statement, the union said that the minister had failed to meet workers' demands for additional staff and overtime pay. Unionists would meet to decide on further action, the statement said.

English: [http://www.ekathimerini.com/216549/article/ekathimerini/news/archaeological ...](http://www.ekathimerini.com/216549/article/ekathimerini/news/archaeological...)

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## **Hungary**

### **Average gross wage increased by 10% in one year**

*March 20, 2017*

The average gross wage rose by an annual 10 percent to 273,822 forints (886 euro) in January 2017, according to the Central Statistical Office (KSH). Net wages grew at the same place as gross wages, also climbing by 10 percent to 182,100 forints. Among others, the rise in the minimum wage and the guaranteed minimum wage of 15% and 25%, respectively, as well as the salary adjustment in new areas of the public sector – affecting among others those working in health and cultural fields – had an impact on earnings growth. In the 1<sup>st</sup> month of 2017, the rise of average net earnings was equal to that of average gross earnings.

English: [http://hungarytoday.hu/news/stats-office-average-gross-wage-hungary ...](http://hungarytoday.hu/news/stats-office-average-gross-wage-hungary...)  
[http://www.ksh.hu/docs/eng ...](http://www.ksh.hu/docs/eng...)

### **Wage increases for teachers are modest**

*March 1, 2017*

A study by the research agency Policy Agenda shows that there had been a 38.7% gross wage increase in the education sector since 2010, compared to only a 22.7% increase in the preceding six years. However, net salaries showed little improvement: an increase of 33.5% was logged between 2010-2016, compared to 38% in the preceding six years. Although wages did not grow at a higher rate on average than in 2004-2010, real net increases did occur in some professions within the education sector. The table shows that while wages increased at a nominal rate among most teachers, the highest jump occurred for kindergarten teachers, who enjoyed a wage increase of 42.1 percent compared to 33.2 percent in the previous period.

English: [http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/study-shows-government-touted ...](http://budapestbeacon.com/news-in-brief/study-shows-government-touted...)

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## Iceland

### **Legislation on equal pay**

*March 9, 2017*

Iceland will be the first country in the world to make private and public employers prove they offer equal pay regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexuality or nationality. All employers with more than 25 staff members will be required to obtain certification to prove they give equal pay for work of equal value. The government announced the introduction to the parliament of this equality legislation on International Women's Day.

English: [http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-09/international-womens-day-iceland ...](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-09/international-womens-day-iceland...)

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## Ireland

### **Bus drivers' strike continues**

*March 25, 2017*

The strike at Bus Éireann, continues at the end of March 2017 and it could escalate significantly the week after, involving Dublin Bus and Iarnród Éireann. Workers at both those companies are to be balloted on taking industrial action in sympathy with and in support of Bus Éireann workers. SIPTU representatives from the three companies are supporting the ongoing strike - which is affecting around 110,000 Bus Éireann customers. Meanwhile, Bus Éireann managers are meeting to consider plans that could involve up to 300 job losses under a voluntary redundancy scheme. Bus Éireann services, with the exception of school transportation, came to a standstill in the dispute, which follows management plans to introduce cost-saving measures without agreement.

English: [http://www.rte.ie/news ...](http://www.rte.ie/news...)  
[http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/bus ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/bus...)

### **Financial deal agreed for 130 former Clerys workers**

*March 21, 2017*

On 21 March 2017, an undisclosed financial settlement between Natrium and Clerys' dismissed workers was reached, ending the workers protest over the store's brutal closure in 2015. SIPTU services division organiser Ethel Buckley said the terms of the deal, which includes an agreement on future local employment in the new store, would remain confidential, but that a 'good will payment' which was 'substantial' in nature would be made to the 130 former employees.

English: [http://www.irishtimes.com/news/consumer/financial-deal-agreed ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/consumer/financial-deal-agreed...)

### **Firefighters protests against changes to call and dispatch services**

*March 6, 2017*

Hundreds of people gathered to support Dublin firefighters as they protested outside fire stations across the capital. The protests highlight their opposition to an attempt to break up the Dublin Fire Brigade (DFB) Emergency Medical Service by removing its ambulance call and dispatch function. In a ballot on February 2017 SIPTU DFB Firefighters voted by 93% to 7% in favour of strike action and 97% to 3% in favour of industrial action.

English: [http://www.dublinlive.ie/news/dublin-news/dublin-firefighters ...](http://www.dublinlive.ie/news/dublin-news/dublin-firefighters...)

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## Italy

### **Alitalia airline workers plan to strike**

*March 20, 2017*

Alitalia unions call on strike on 5 April 2017, after a government-mediated meeting with management over the loss-making airline's turnaround plan failed to bring the two sides to an agreement. Filt-CGIL union told that they reject the business plan and confirm the strike. The airline, which currently employs 12,500 globally, said in a statement the redundancies 'are painful but necessary'.

English: [http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/1st-leadalitalia-airline-workers-confirm ...](http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/1st-leadalitalia-airline-workers-confirm...)

### **Decree curbs pay flexibility**

*March 16, 2017*

The government has approved a decree abolishing one of the most flexible and unregulated forms of payment for workers, heading off a referendum on the issue and accepting trade union's demands on this issue. Payment by vouchers was introduced in 2008 as an experiment for seasonal farm workers but its use has expanded steadily and is now widely abused, according to labour experts. The largest union, CGIL, collected three million signatures last year to force a referendum to abolish voucher payment. However, rather than risk a bruising ballot-box defeat, the government has decided to act pre-emptively by withdrawing the vouchers pay system before the vote is held.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-employment-reform ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-employment-reform...)

### **Report on manufacturing**

*March 8, 2017*

The employers' organisation Federmeccanica produced a report on technological innovations and the consecutive changes in terms of skills. The second part describes the analysed initiatives, set up either unilaterally or jointly by social partners, aimed at developing future skills, such as continuous training, entrepreneurship education programmes, partnerships with educational institutions, promotion of school-to-work transition. With the renewal of the collective agreement, signed in November 2016, the social partners introduced an individual right to continuous training accounting for 24 hours (on a 3-year base), in order to 'update, improve or develop knowledge and professional skills linked to technological and organizational innovation of productive and working process'.

English: [http://adapt.it/Industry4EU/National\\_report\\_intro\\_cover\\_def.pdf](http://adapt.it/Industry4EU/National_report_intro_cover_def.pdf)

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## Latvia

### **Key economic indicators**

*March 17, 2017*

The OECD published an interesting report with key economic figures. The main objective of the paper is to describe the corporate governance setting in the country, including the supervisory board regulations and stakeholder involvement. But, there are also data on the structure of the economy. In the period 2010 and 2015 unemployment decreased with 10% (from 19.5% in 2010 to 9.7% in 2015).

English: [http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oced/governance/corporate ...](http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oced/governance/corporate...)

### **Wages data updated**

*March 16, 2017*

Seasonally non-adjusted data of the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) show that, compared to the 4th quarter of 2015, in the 4th quarter of 2016 hourly labour costs rose by 51 cents or 7.3%, reaching 7.46 euros. Seasonally adjusted data, in turn, show that labour costs increased by 7.8%. In the 4th quarter of 2016, the highest hourly labour costs were observed in financial and insurance activities (15.35 euros), information and communication (11.90 euros), energy sector (10.74 euros), public administration and defence (9.58 euros), and mining and quarrying (9.44 euros). The lowest hourly labour costs were recorded in accommodation and food service activities (4.98 euros), arts, entertainment and recreation (6.05 euros), other service activities and education (6.18 euros), as well as real estate activities (6.43 euros).

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

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## Liechtenstein

### **General binding effect of agreements settled**

*March 29, 2017*

Several sectoral sectors have negotiated collective agreements and the social partners have asked for a general binding effect. In most cases this is now settled (per 1 April 2017).

German: [http://www.volksblatt.li/nachricht ...](http://www.volksblatt.li/nachricht...)

Overview (in German): [http://www.lanv.li/GAV/GAVinLiechtenstein ...](http://www.lanv.li/GAV/GAVinLiechtenstein...)

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## Lithuania

### **Central bank projects substantial wage growth**

*March 21, 2017*

The Bank of Lithuania projects that this year the economy will expand by 2.6%, while its growth rate next year will reach 2.8%. Wage growth, estimated to stand at 6.1% in 2017 and 5.7% in 2018, will outstrip the rising inflation rates. Such projections for economic and wage growth are higher than expected and announced at the end of 2016. In 2016, the average wage showed the highest increase since the economic recovery after the global financial crisis, reaching 7.9%. This was followed by an increase in minimum wage, yet wage developments were vigorous even having eliminated its effect.

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

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## Luxembourg

### **Union surprised by sudden closure Alfa Hotel**

*March 16, 2017*

The large imposing and traditional Alfa Hotel opposite the capital's train station, suddenly found itself facing a closure order, affecting about 70 employees, due to internal disputes. According to the OGBL trade, ongoing disputes between the owners of the building, a Swiss consortium, and the principal tenant Rolphe Reding, are the reasons for the abrupt closure. The union spoke about a disaster for the staff. The business ran smoothly at the hotel and everything had always been in order. Talks are planned about the consequences.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/due-to-disputes-luxembourg-city ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/luxembourg/due-to-disputes-luxembourg-city...)

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### **Rothschild changes dismissal plan**

*March 10, 2017*

The Rothschild bank announced in January 2017 that it will move its IT department from the Grand Duchy to Switzerland, making approximately 15 employees redundant by April 2018. The company's apparent refusal of negotiating a social plan for the affected employees met criticism from the trade unions ALEBA and OGBL. In an internal note, the private bank informs its staff representatives that the affected employees do not have to leave the company by 2018 as there are a lot of career opportunities inside the Rothschild group.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/business/switzerland-move-rothschild-luxembourg ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/business/switzerland-move-rothschild-luxembourg...)

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## Malta

### **Cabin crew ends dispute**

*March 17, 2017*

The industrial action by Air Malta cabin crew has been lifted, seven hours after the Union of Cabin Crew stunned management with the unilateral action. In a brief statement, the airline said that operations will



return to normal with immediate effect. Cabin crew had embarked on the action in protest at what they said were breaches in the collective agreement.

English: [http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170317/local/industrial-action ...](http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170317/local/industrial-action...)

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## Netherlands

### **Social plan at AkzoNobel**

*March 13, 2017*

Paint maker AkzoNobel NV is exploring a sale or merger with a peer, and is in talks with several companies. The trade unions had announced strikes in case the management would consider serious reductions in the provisions of the existing social plan. The unions and the AkzoNobel management came to an agreement to continue with the current social plan. The watering down of different provisions has been cancelled in the deal. Earlier this month, workers' representatives and trade unions had built a coalition with the management against a non-friendly takeover effort by US competitor PPG.

English: [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/03/akzonobel-prepares ...](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2017/03/akzonobel-prepares...)

[http://www.reuters.com/article/us-akzonobel ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-akzonobel...)

Dutch: <https://www.eemskrant.nl/fnv-tevreden-over-akkoord-sociaal-plan-akzonobel/>

### **Collective agreement in construction approved**

*March 8, 2017*

The negotiation results for an agreement in construction that runs from 1 February 2017 to 31 March 2018 were approved by the membership of the bargaining partners. The deal leads to a pay increase, starting 1 July 2017, with 1%. Another increase of 0.75% is foreseen for 1 January 2018. Other elements are a substantial increase of the employers' contribution to the sickness insurance and changes in the rostering systematic. Two crucial aspects are the possibility for early retirement in arduous jobs and the shift to direct labour. Partners formulated the intention to develop a flanking policy as soon as there is a breakthrough in the national pension debate. Direct labour will be promoted as an alternative for external flexibility.

Dutch: [https://www.fnvbouw.nl/actueel/nieuws/paginas/Caoakkoord\\_Bouw ...](https://www.fnvbouw.nl/actueel/nieuws/paginas/Caoakkoord_Bouw...)

The agreement (in Dutch): [http://www.bouwendnederland.nl/download ...](http://www.bouwendnederland.nl/download...)

### **Unionist wins case against Shel/NAM**

*March 2, 2017*

Trade union FNV active member Bob van Luijk won an unfair dismissal case against the company Shell/NAM. Van Luijk was dismissed from Shell subsidiary NAM after 31 years of service after being accused of leaking sensitive information about the company's pension scheme to the trade union Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV). Van Luijk is an employees' representative on the board of the pension fund, and had shared widely available information with other executive members and the FNV. The consequence of the dismissal would have been no redundancy pay or unemployment benefit.

English: [http://www.industriall-union.org/dutch-trade-unionist-wins-case ...](http://www.industriall-union.org/dutch-trade-unionist-wins-case...)

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## Norway

### **Deal for 2.4 percent wage increase**

*March 1, 2017*

The trade unions and the biggest employers' organisation have agreed a wage deal for 2017, avoiding a strike. The agreement will result in a 2.4 percent increase in wages. The agreement between the unions LO and YS and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO), covers a broad section of manufacturing workers and is expected to set guidelines for other wage talks in the country. The deal includes workers in the oil industry, but employees working on many offshore drilling rigs will hold their own wage talks later.

English: [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-4314048/Norwegian-unions ...](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-4314048/Norwegian-unions...)

### **Dock workers lose boycott case**



March 1, 2017

A long dispute at the docks has ended after the country's Supreme Court ruled that a collective agreement covering workers in 13 of the largest ports restricted freedom of establishment, which could not be justified under European Economic Area (EEA) law. While the employers welcomed the ruling by the Supreme Court, trade union confederation LO and its affiliate NTF will need to take it into account when discussing the country's commitments under the EEA agreement. Although LO mainly supports the EEA agreement, some of its affiliates question certain of its implications. The EEA agreement is due to appear on the agenda on the next LO congress in May 2017.

English: [https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/norway-dock ...](https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/norway-dock...)

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## Poland

### **March during International Women's Day**

March 8, 2017

Protesters have gathered in a number of civil rights protests in the capital to mark the International Women's Day. They were demanding 'full reproductive rights' and against the country's strict abortion policy outside the governing conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party's headquarters. Other demands include the implementation of an anti-gender violence convention and the improvement of the financial situation of women.

English: [http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/296854,Marches-in-Poland ...](http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/296854,Marches-in-Poland...)

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## Portugal

### **Ferry workers on strike**

March 29, 2017

Ferry workers started a partial strike action that affected the Tagus River ferry crossings. The action was staged in protest to problems with the boats and as a method to put pressure on the reviewing of the Company Agreement. The adherence to the strike was of around 90 percent.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/partial-strike-action-will-continue ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/partial-strike-action-will-continue...)

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### **Financial participation of TAP-workforce**

March 23, 2017

The government announced that it had approved the public offer for sale of 75,000 shares in the national airline, TAP, to its employees, at the price of €10.38 a share, saying that it expects the operation to go off well. TAP is to compile a list of the workers who fulfil the requirements to buy shares as part of the operation. The price of the shares on offer - which represents 5% of TAP's share capital - is at a discount of about 5% on the price at which the Atlantic Gateway consortium bought its shares in late 2014, at €10.93 each. Under the new model for TAP's privatisation agreed with the current government, which took office in November 2014, the consortium will have 45% of TAP.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/government-approves ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/government-approves...)

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## Romania

### **Substantial increase of doctors' wage**

March 27, 2017

The government announced an improvement of the wages of doctors. A doctor working in intensive care units will earn up to 3,600 euro per month in 2018. The labour ministry is working with specialists who have been in this field even since before 1989. According to the ministry, other wage increases in the public sector will be done gradually until 2020.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-doctors-wages ...>

### **Rail workers strike for higher wages**

*March 22, 2017*

Rail workers have staged a walk-out after trade unions and management failed to agree about a wage increase. More than 150 trains were affected by the strike. Employees of the Romanian CFR state rail network are demanding a 25 percent wage increase and better working conditions. Railway management says they can afford only a 22.5 percent raise.

English: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-4338888/Romanian-rail-workers ...>

### **Collective bargaining back on the agenda**

*March 20, 2017*

Collective agreements will become mandatory in public institutions and private companies, said the minister of public consultation and social dialogue. Collective work agreements were removed in 2011 by the old government. The current law should be amended so that the minimum conditions for employees' rights can be created. All trade unions have been asking for more bargaining commitment during consultations with the social partners on the proposed amendments of the Social Dialogue Law (L62/2011), which blocks collective bargaining.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-government-brings-back ...>  
<http://www.cartel-alfa.ro/Docs ...>

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## Serbia

### **Income data for 2016**

*March 15, 2017*

The statistical office released household income data for 2016. The data include figures about regular salaries and wages, pensions, social benefits and other income. Also covered are the regional differences in the country. In the fourth quarter of 2016, the available monthly income in money and in kind, per household amounted to 60639 RSD (490 euro) and showed an increase of 4.1% in nominal terms, relative to the same quarter 2015, and increase of 1.0% relative to the third quarter 2016, in nominal terms. The largest share of income in money and in kind refers to the salaries and wages of the employed (49.0%), pensions (31.7%), income from agriculture, hunting and fishing (5.6%), natural consumption (4.3%), other social insurance receipts (2.5%), other income (2.4%) and other receipts (2.2%).

English: <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/repository/documents ...>

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## Slovakia

### **KIA bargaining finalised**

*March 27, 2017*

Trade unions and the management of the carmaker Kia Motors Slovakia in Teplice nad Váhom, have agreed on an increase of tariff wages and bonuses for night shifts, bringing a week-long strike alert to an end. An appendix to the collective agreement will secure manufacturing employees a tariff monthly wage rise of €75 and an increase in the bonus for night work by €0.36 per hour. Originally, the trade unions requested a 10% rise in tariff wages for manufacturing workers and a 7% increase for administrative workers. Kia offered 5.5% for the former and 3.5% for the latter.

English: <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20494104/trade-unionists-and-management-of-kia ...>

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## Slovenia

### **Agreement on doctors' pay**

*March 8, 2017*

The government has confirmed the agreement reached after longstanding talks with the representative of the doctors and dentists about salaries. According to the scheme, settled between the Health minister and FIDES, the doctors' trade union, medical professionals could earn up to a fourth more of their base salary if they work more. The agreement came on time to avoid an announced strike, and the government has six months to submit to the Parliament the amended limitations to the Wage Act and ensure that state budget is allocated to support the measures, which the parties involved defined as a small health-system reform.

English: [https://www.ansamed.info/nuova\\_europa/en/news/countries/slovenia ...](https://www.ansamed.info/nuova_europa/en/news/countries/slovenia ...)

### **Social dialogue in metal processing**

*March 5, 2017*

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry published a country report, dedicated to the metal working sector. It can be seen as a mapping exercise of past and existing unilateral programmes, as well as social dialogue initiatives to deal with the skills mismatch arising from the digitalisation of production methods and developing the necessary technical skills. In section 4.2.3 the representative trade union of metal and electrical industry, summarises its point of view, current endeavours and future plans. According to the union, it is necessary to establish social dialogue that will protect the interests of workers in the complex framework of the meaning of decent work, while further limiting precarious forms of employment.

English: <http://adapt.it/Industry4EU/Industry4EU ...>

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## **Spain**

### **Landmark public sector agreement on reducing precarious work**

*March 29, 2017*

The government and the trade unions (CSIF, UGT and CC OO) have signed an agreement to reduce precariousness in public employment. The public authorities will organise several calls to cover 250,000 permanent positions in the public services for the next three years. The aim of this process is to transform temporary workers into permanent civil servants. The agreement also includes an increase in the replacement rate - the number of substitutions for each retirement - to 100% in essential services.

Spanish: <http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2017/03/29/actualidad ...>

### **Bargaining for metal workers concluded**

*March 23, 2017*

The trade unions CC.OO and UGT and the employers' organisation in the metal sector have signed a framework agreement. The agreement will apply to around one million workers in some 170,000 companies. It sets the frame for negotiations at regional and local level. The aim is to work towards more homogeneity in terms of working conditions and salaries whilst still taking into account local specificities. Several themes have been listed for future negotiations, such as work organisation, equal opportunities and career policy.

Spanish: <http://www.ugt-fica.org/41-ultimas-noticias/1013-acordado-el-texto-definitivo ...>  
<http://confemetal.es/index ...>

### **Dockers strike called off**

*March 17, 2017*

The dockers' unions have called off a planned strike action after the opposition parties in the Parliament voted against a government decree, meant to liberalise the hiring of port labour. The decree, which would have allowed companies to freely hire workers to load and unload cargo. Current port labour practises, which involve employing workers provided by a pool company, contravene EU regulations, resulting in the government racking up €23m in fines since 2014. The European Commission, which suspended the fines as the government showed progress on the reforms, has suggested they may be imposed again.

English: <http://container-mag.com/2017/03/17/strikes-off-spanish-opposition-votes-reforms/>

### **Taxi drivers protest against Uber**

*March 16, 2017*

Taxi drivers in Barcelona and Madrid were set to strike in protest against the stance of public authorities that they believe favours unfair competition from multinational firms such as Uber and Cabify. Public transport is threatened by powerful lobbies that are seeking to remove the regulatory framework surrounding the taxi activities said the associations behind the strike in a statement. In late 2014, a court ordered Uber to stop operations in the country after a complaint from a taxi association that came in the wake of numerous protests from the sector. However, in mid-2015, the firm returned to Barcelona operating as a food delivery service known as Uber Eats. In March 2016, Uber made a comeback in the capital in the form of UberX which sees users put in touch with professional drivers holding passenger transport vehicle (VTC) licenses, which fall under different regulations from the taxi sector.

English: [http://elpais.com/elpais/2017/03/16/inenglish ...](http://elpais.com/elpais/2017/03/16/inenglish...)

### **Education workers strike against education law**

*March 9, 2017*

Trade unions, students and parents have begun a strike to demand the conservative government an end to budget cuts in the sector and the abolition of the controversial education law. The strike was called by the Platform for the Public School, which brings together teachers, students and the Spanish Confederation of Associations of Parents and Mothers of Students (Ceapa).

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

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

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## Sweden

### **Building workers' union plea for gender equality**

*March 8, 2017*

The building workers' union has been both praised and criticised after its all-male board donned 'pussy hats' and posed for a picture in support of gender equality. The board of the union wanted to pay attention on International's Women's Day to all women in the construction industry and tell them how much they are needed and the respect they deserve because they dare to break gender roles. Far from all the reactions were negative. A group of female representatives for the Seko trade union in Gothenburg also posted their own picture of themselves in pussy hats with a nod to the building workers.

English: [https://www.thelocal.se/jobs/article/why-these-swedish-trade-union-bosses ...](https://www.thelocal.se/jobs/article/why-these-swedish-trade-union-bosses...)

### **Legislation after Laval**

*March 1, 2017*

The trade unions will again be able to take industrial action in order to get foreign companies to sign collective agreements for their posted workers. That is what the government proposes, arguing the limitations introduced through the so-called lex Laval go too far. After the EU Court of Justice's judgement in the much talked-about Laval case, a provision was introduced in the Posting of Workers Act which meant it was no longer allowed to take industrial action in order to secure a collective agreement with a foreign company, if that company can show that its employees already receive the minimum provisions covered by the agreement. The problem with this is that unions have no way of taking action against an employer who has not entered into a collective agreement, if it should turn out that this employer provides provisions of a lesser quality. The unions have therefore demanded to be given the right to take industrial action.

English: [http://www.nordiclbourjournal.org/nyheter/news ...](http://www.nordiclbourjournal.org/nyheter/news...)

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## Switzerland

### **Collective agreement for hairdressers**

*March 28, 2017*

The negotiators in the hairdressers' branch came to an agreement. The deal includes a wage increase in an effort to make the sector more attractive, protection against social dumping and measures to prevent bogus self-employment. Trade union Unia organised a large survey in 2016 among workers in the sector. The outcome was used in the negotiations. During the branch trade conference in March 2017, members of this

sector discussed the current situation of hairdressers and hairdressers. After approval of the deal the agreement the procedure for a generally binding effect will be initiated.

German: <http://www.unia.ch/de/aktuell ...>

French: <http://www.unia.ch/fr/actualites ...>

### **Campaign for better working conditions in care**

*March 25, 2017*

The trade union Unia has launched the campaign: ‘Investing in People, instead of a race for profit!’. This action aims for promoting better working conditions in the care sector. The campaign petition in this regard has resulted in more than 10,000 signatures already.

French: <http://www.unia.ch/fr/actualites ...>

German: <http://www.unia.ch/de/aktuell ...>

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## Turkey

### **Union mission to support workers**

*March 31, 2017*

After the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016, the country has been in a continuing state of emergency with limitations and restrictions on fundamental rights. A joint union meeting with around 50 union leaders came just before the constitutional referendum to be held on 16 April, proposing a change from a parliamentary to a presidential system. The government continues to postpone strikes in the metal, glass, mining and rubber industries. Through a decree, it has added, ‘breaking economic and financial stability’ as another argument for banning strikes. A strike at one of the private banks was banned for this reason. The participants stressed that specific attention must be devoted to respect for and full enforcement of trade union rights, including freedom of association, the right to strike and collective bargaining.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2017/march/pressure-builds ...>

### **Petition to drop trade unionists’ convictions**

*March 16, 2017*

Global transport union ITF has demanded the unconditional withdrawal of convictions against 14 union members caught up in government moves to outlaw trade unionism in the country. More than 4,000 people have already signed a new online LabourStart petition to demand justice for the imprisoned unionists. The moves come after the supreme court upheld the sentences, despite previous appeals against the verdicts by the ITF and TÜMTİS.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2017/march ...>

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## United Kingdom

### **How to safeguard workers’ rights under Brexit?**

*March 31, 2017*

The triggering of Article 50, the start of two years of negotiations about leaving the EU, has led to an enormous press coverage. In a blog, the question is raised what the real agenda is for unions and working people in what appears to be merely an act of political theatre. The trade union confederation TUC, commented on the draft guidelines published by the Council of the European Union on the EU’s principles and approach to the negotiations. According to the TUC the type of transitional agreement option, with a prolongation of EU acquis, would provide stability, continuity and certainty for workers’ rights and trading rights within the single market until a new trade deal is reached, thereby avoiding a damaging period of high tariffs and additional bureaucracy while a new trade is being negotiated.

English: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/international-issues/europe/eu-referendum/may-should ...>

<http://touchstoneblog.org.uk/2017/03/article50-the-union-response-is-all-about-good ...>

### **BT pay deal out to ballot**

March 24, 2017

Members across British Telecom are being urged to accept the company's 'full and final' pay offer of 2.6% - a settlement which is backdated to January 2017, fully consolidated and above the relevant Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation rate of 2.5%. The deal, which has been unanimously endorsed by trade union CWU's BT Executive Committee, will be placed before NewGRID (including Workforce 2020) grade members in a consultative ballot that will open on 30 March 2017, running until 11 April.

English: <http://www.cwu.org/media/news/2017/march/24/bt-pay-deal-out-to-ballot/>

The pay offer: <http://www.cwu.org/media/9626/bt-pay-bulletin-no-6-2017.pdf>

### **Huge disparities between average pay and top earners**

March 22, 2017

The Equality Trust published an analysis on top earnings. It reveals that CEOs in the top 100 companies pocket an average of £5.3m each year, or 386 times that of a worker earning the National Living Wage. Over two thirds (67%) of FTSE 100 CEOs are paid more than 100 times the average UK salary. Ninety per cent of FTSE 100 CEOs are paid at least 100 times more than the National Living Wage. The analysis comes at a moment where research has shown that a combination of rising inflation and pay restraint means that average real pay is falling in the public sector, and is expected to continue falling over the next three years. Forecasts suggest that average real pay in the public sector will fall back below 2004-05 levels by the end of the parliament (2019-20).

English: [https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/uk ...](https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/uk...)

The analysis: [https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/sites/default ...](https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/sites/default...)

### **BA workers deserve better**

March 13, 2017

A group of academics wrote to the Guardian seven years ago, protesting at British Airways' imposition of lesser pay and conditions for its cabin crew, and the apparent desire of its management to break their union. In a new open letter, they criticise the management that, in an amplified reprise of the events, is refusing to negotiate with Unite, having threatened to remove bonuses for 2016 and 2017 and banned staff travel concessions, while the crew have been compelled to take strike action, amounting to as many as 26 days.

English: [https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/mar/13/to-fly-to-starve ...](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/mar/13/to-fly-to-starve...)

### **Fall of real earnings predicted**

March 9, 2017

The Resolution Foundation predicts in an analysis of the government budget that the country will face the worst decade of pay growth seen in 210 years. Average productivity growth between 2016 and 2021 is expected to be just 1.3 per cent, while nominal pay growth is revised down from the second quarter of 2018 onwards. When combined with rising inflation, this means that real earnings are set to actually fall later in 2017 and are only projected to return to their pre-crisis peak after the end of the forecast period in late 2022, 15 years after the pay squeeze began.

English: [http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2017/03/Spring-Budget ...](http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2017/03/Spring-Budget...)

### **Zero hours contracts hit record high**

March 3, 2017

One constant trend on the labour market has been the continued rise of zero-hours contracts (ZHCs). Movements in the number of ZHCs became a fixture of labour market analysis since 2013 and a worry for those concerned about the quality of work. The Resolution Foundation has analysed the latest Labour Force Survey figures and reveals that the number of people on ZHCs has risen to a new high of 910,000. That's a jump of more than 100,000 since the final three months of 2015 – an increase of 13% – and 30% higher than in Q4 2014. If that rapid growth is maintained, reaching the 1 million markers soon appears inevitable.

English: [http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/blog/workers-on-zero-hours ...](http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/blog/workers-on-zero-hours...)

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