

# collective bargaining

Issue 6/2018 June

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



AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LABOUR STUDIES  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



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## **European sources**

### **Divergent bargaining outcomes for agency workers**

*June 22, 2018*

An article in the European Journal of Industrial Relations investigates under what conditions unions can successfully regulate precarious employment. The authors compare the divergent trajectories of collective bargaining on agency work in the Italian and German metal sectors from the late 1990s and explain the differences by the interaction between trade unions' institutional and associational power resources,

mediated by employers' divide-and-rule strategies and by union strategies to (re)build a unitary front.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **A statistical portrait of the European economy**

*June 21, 2018*

The Eurostat publication *The European economy since the start of the millennium – a statistical portrait* aims to show how main features of the economy of the European Union and its Member States have evolved since 2000 through a large range of statistical data giving both a micro- and a macro-economic perspective. Throughout the publication, brief descriptions of the main findings are completed with interactive visualisations, that make it possible to compare one country with other countries. The interactive publication has one section dedicated to household income, with part 2.1 dedicated to income, pensions and poverty.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The report: [in English ...](#) The income section: [in English ...](#)

### **Increase of income inequality in Europe**

*June 15, 2018*

According to a study published by the OECD, income inequality has increased and social mobility stalled across the world's richest countries since the 1990s. The OECD stated that barriers to social mobility are harming economic progress by shutting out vital workers and undermining political stability as people become cynical about their prospects. The report says that in absolute terms, almost everyone in OECD countries has seen an improvement in living standards and life chances than previous generations, with greater access to higher levels of education, healthcare and better paid employment. But while income mobility was a reality for many people born between 1955 and 1975 from low-educated parents, it has stagnated for those born after the mid-1970s.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read on: [in English ...](#) Read online: [in English ...](#)

### **The labour market in 2017**

*June 12, 2018*

The Eurofound Yearbook 2017 *Living and working in Europe* has several interesting sections based on the agency's research activities over the course of 2017. The agency sees positive trends in employment, with rising numbers in work and a continued expansion of employment. However, challenges remain with labour markets beset by long-term unemployment, underemployment and high levels of inactivity, and quality of life that in many dimensions is poor within certain population groups. The first chapter (on labour market changes) reiterates that in-work poverty increased during the crisis – 8% of workers were estimated to be at risk in 2007, 2 percentage points lower than in 2014. Depressed wages, cuts in working hours and job losses among earners in a household all exacerbated financial hardship.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Social dialogue, a 'blind spot'**

*June 12, 2018*

In an overview of corporate social responsibility practices, it is concluded that even though social dialogue is a fundamental right enshrined and promoted by international standards, it still appears as a corporate social responsibility 'blind spot'. This is due to a global lack of company commitment on this issue, as revealed by the overall average score of 25/100 achieved by 2,400 companies under review. Companies headquartered in Europe perform only slightly better than their peers on social dialogue, with an average score of 38/100. The subjects most often addressed in collective bargaining are employee salaries (72% of companies listed in Europe), health and safety conditions (70% of companies listed in Europe), and working hours (64%).

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Pay trends in the public sector**

*June 10, 2018*

A report commissioned by EPSU from the Labour Research Department (LRD) provides an overview of trends in over 40 countries. The main findings of the report cluster countries in five main categories: comparable pay growth interrupted by the crisis (10 countries); lower public service pay growth made worse by the crisis (4 countries); lower public service pay growth not clearly linked to crisis (3 countries); similar

pay growth across the two sectors (12 countries); and faster pay growth in public services (11 countries) - leaving three countries that were hard to classify. The analysis included 24 EU countries and 18 non-EU countries, with several excluded because of lack of data.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

## **Food delivery workers' mobilisations on the rise across Europe**

*June 9, 2018*

Although companies like Deliveroo or Foodora refuse even to recognise them as employees, food delivery riders have taken a lead in organising workers in the European gig economy. Following an extensive overview of different European initiatives in mobilising food delivery workers Jacobin authors argue that the riders' visibility and recognisability allows many precarious workers, whose mechanisms of exploitation and subordination are far less visible, to identify with them thus empowering them as well.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Austria**

### **Mass protest against 60-hour workweek**

*June 30, 2018*

Some 80.000 to 100.000 people have demonstrated in Vienna against government plans to raise the permissible weekly hours to 60 hours and the regular working day to 12 hours. Trade unions call for a referendum before the maximum working hours are increased. Trade unions and opposition parties are against the plans to increase the working hours but the bill is expected to pass. There was also a lot of opposition on a specific point in an earlier version of the bill: the permitted reasons employees could provide to refuse to work more than 10 hours per day. The government eventually backed down on this point and said employees will be allowed to refuse to work overtime without giving a reason.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Labour market statistics 2017**

*June 7, 2018*

Statistics Austria published its Yearbook 2017 with final data online. The report (in German, but with an English summary) reveals that the employment rate for the population aged 15 to 64 years increased to 72.2%. There were 247 900 unemployed persons, the unemployment rate amounted to 5.5%. In 2017, 47.7% of female employed and 11.9% of male employed persons worked part-time, in total 28.7% of all persons employed. A separate paragraph (2.6) provides data on the wage developments (in 2016).

Read on: [in German ...](#)

### **Large-scale survey among workers**

*June 6, 2018*

The Chamber of Labour and trade union confederation ÖGB launched a large-scale dialogue with the membership. The campaign led to the organisation of Dialog meetings across the country, ranging from workplace visits to street pickets. The two organisations summed up the outcome in a first report. A crucial part of the action was the organisation of a survey on the future of labour. The response was impressive, with 300,000 people responding to the questions raised. The survey included questions on issues such as the planned introduction of more possibilities for enlarging the working time (to 12 hours), the need to act against social dumping, the equal treatment of men and women and paid days off for educational purposes.

Read the summary: [in German ...](#) The report: [in German ...](#) See also: [on YouTube ...](#)

### **Every fifth hour of overtime not paid**

*June 5, 2018*

Based on figures from Statistics Austria, the Chamber of Labour AK writes that every fifth hour of overtime is not paid and the employees have thus been withheld about one billion euro. 45 million working hours were not paid as overtime while they should have been. AK calls for a 100% penalty payment for unpaid

overtime and states that it is a company's responsibility to prove that claims of employees are wrong. Furthermore, they want systematically incorrect working time records to become a criminal offense.

Read on: [in German \(1\) ...](#)

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## Belgium

### **48-hour strike rail union, more strikes announced**

*June 29, 2018*

A planned 48-hour strike that was held at the end of this month will be followed with four more days of strikes in July, according to union statements. Unions are striking in protest at a new bill on the designation of arduous work and early retirement. The union stated that it is in total opposition to the introduction of the measures which would, according to them, endanger the regime applying to the full range of railway workers. The list of jobs involving heavy labour which is currently being considered does not include all rail workers. The result, union critics say, would mean some employees having to work longer, but without receiving an increased pension when they retire.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Prison officers strike against minimum service obligations**

*June 20, 2018*

The government plans to oblige prison officers to provide a minimum service in prisons during long-running strikes. Unions describe this as a breach of the fundamental right to strike. Prison officers at several prisons across the country laid down their work in protest of the plan to oblige them to provide a minimum service during strikes. The strike has hit prisons across the country. Turnout varied across the country with 74% of prison officers at Flemish jails reported for work to just 11% reporting for the morning shift at a Leuven jail.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Difficult talks at Carrefour lead to social plan**

*June 15, 2018*

After the large supermarket chain Carrefour announced that around 1,000 of the 8,000 jobs at the chain will go, the workers have initiated several actions and negotiations on a social plan started. The management declared that redundancies can be avoided if enough workers leave the company voluntarily or early or work fewer hours. The negotiations with the trade unions have led to an agreement in principle that reduces the total redundancies to 950 jobs, with more local supermarkets staying open. Part of the plan is the use of a much-criticised early retirement scheme for workers beyond the age of 56 years.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read on: [in Dutch ...](#) Read on: [in French ...](#)

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## Bulgaria

### **CITUB expects wages to reach 60% of EU average in 4 years**

*June 21, 2018*

The president of trade union CITUB is optimistic if wages keep growing in real terms at the present pace, they will reach 60% of the European average in four years' time. The director of the Institute for Social and Trade Union Studies at CITUB, on the other hand, said that despite a GDP growth rebound to 2.4% for 2017 and 2.3% expected for 2018, the labour market is deeply scarred by wounds which need to be healed while the social safety nets are gasping. They both spoke to the press during the presentation of 'Benchmarking Working Europe 2018'.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Croatia

### **Strikes Croatia Airlines in the middle of tourist season**

June 18, 2018

Croatian Airlines' pilots, cabin crew and technical staff are preparing for a major strike in July. In the middle of the tourist season that is a key source of income for the country. The strike was announced after a new round of negotiations (see our May newsletter) on a collective agreement resulted in nothing. Unions are demanding more days off and more vacation days, a deal on cabin crew rotation schedules, and increased compensation for workers while on sick leave. They also want more full-time, unlimited contracts for cabin crew staff who have been working only on seasonal contracts for years. A union statement says all the conditions have been met for industrial action and that they will inform the public of planned developments in the coming period.

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## Cyprus

### **Municipality claim strike rubbish collectors was unreasonable**

June 29, 2018

Following the industrial action last month (see our May newsletter), municipal rubbish collectors of the Aglandjia municipality went on a 24-hour strike to protest the privatisation of garbage collection services. Unions are worried about outsourcing the services because private garbage collection companies refuse to bargain with unions. In a statement the municipality says it had asked for the labour ministry's intervention to put an end to the strike measures. Unions stated they wanted the municipality to rescind the decision and make other arrangements with the workers.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Czechia

### **Worker shortages leads to quota for foreign workers**

June 13, 2018

With the lowest jobless rate in the European Union the country is dealing with serious worker shortages. Restaurant and hotel owners for example are struggling with a major shortage of skilled workers due to the low unemployment rate and the rapid growth of the sector. The government now wants to gain full control over the number of work permits issued to foreigners so they can respond quicker to labour market developments. The proposed quota system aims to simplify the processing of work permits for foreigners.

Read on: [in English \(1\)...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

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### **Fast increase of wages**

June 5, 2018

Compared to 2017, the fastest real year-on-year wage growth since the Q1 2003 took place in the first quarter of 2018. The average gross monthly nominal wage per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee was Kč 30,265 (or 1162 euro), which was Kč 2,385 or 8.6% more than in the same period of 2017, according to the Statistical Office (ČSÚ). The increase in wages was also higher than inflation. In Q1 2018 consumer prices grew by 1.9%, so wages increased by 6.6% in real terms.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Denmark

### **Shortages qualified farm workers**

June 18, 2018

A new survey by the scientific centre for food and agriculture, SEGES, shows a serious increase in personnel shortages in the agricultural sector. According to the survey, 22.3% of the country's farmers were in need of qualified workers in the first half of 2018, compared to 2.2% in 2010. The situation is worst within pig and poultry farming. Trade union 3F states that, although the unemployment rate is currently very low, there are enough unemployed workers in the country to do the work. The trade union claims that the agriculture

sector would rather employ foreign workers than unemployed Danish people.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Employment for all within reach**

*June 8, 2018*

Trade union confederation LO published its Economic forecast. LO expects that the workforce will be growing steadily in the coming years and the potential for further growth in employment is therefore strong. The majority of companies get the workers they need and labour shortages are very modest and almost unchanged compared to last year. In certain areas, however, there are challenges when it comes to attracting employees with specific qualifications, including skilled workers. It will be crucial to invest in those who are marginalised and without a foothold on the labour market. Also, more investment in training, education and skills' upgrading is needed.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The forecast: [in Danish ...](#)

### **Negotiations for the platform economy**

*June 7, 2018*

The Danish government and three political parties have concluded an agreement on work in the platform economy. Trade union confederation that had put forward a proposal to ensure targeted control with the digital platforms speaks about a 'promising' initiative. However, there are still pending issues when it comes to employers' liability towards the persons working on the platform and working conditions like pension contributions, pay during sickness, maternity leave.

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## **Estonia**

### **Pay rise border patrol guards**

*June 19, 2018*

A pay deal has been agreed that increases the gross basic salary of patrol officers and border guards from 1.075 to at least 1.280 euro in 2019. Besides the increased basic salaries staff will now get several bonuses for overnight, holiday and on-call. A total of 12.9 million euro has been earmarked for wage increases which will allow for a rise of all employees' base salaries by an average of 10%

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## **Finland**

### **Basic data in yearbook**

*June 12, 2018*

Statistics Finland's publication *Finland in Figures 2018* is a pocket-size compact information package about the country and its citizens. The booklet provides key data on the population, economy, living conditions and culture in the form of statistics and graphics. The yearbook has separate sections on income and consumption, on labour market issues and on social protection. The section on Wages, Salaries and Labour Costs provides several graphs on earnings by occupation, level of education and age.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The Yearbook: [in English ...](#)

### **SAK accuses government of ending tripartite negotiations**

*June 7, 2018*

When the government presented its plans for a new labour legislation involving initiatives to increase flexibility and leading to more overtime work, unions already expressed their concerns and disapproval (see our May newsletter). This month, the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) stated that the government has in practise ended any tripartite consensus when drafting new labour legislation. SAK claims



that the government has been inviting labour market parties just to listen to what changes are planned, not to participate.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## France

### **Rail strikes continue during summer holidays**

*June 28, 2018*

Two out of the four trade unions that led the strikes since early April have decided to continue the action, even though the cause of their protests - president Emmanuel Macron's rail reforms - have been voted through parliament and signed into law. The unions see the abolition of the rail reform as their objective and think the only way they have a chance is by striking. During the last three months the participation rate of rail workers in the rolling strikes has decreased to the point when on the final day of the strike only 32 percent of train drivers participated. The two unions that will continue to their strike during the summer, the CGT Cheminots and Sud Rail, together represent 51% of the rail workers.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Energy workers cut off gas Elysee Palace**

*June 21, 2018*

Members of the energy workers' trade union association, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) shut off the supply of gas to the Elysee Palace, for three hours to protest against privatisation. The union underlined that the action was held because of reports saying that the authorities intend to privatise this autumn both Electricité de France as well as all of its major subsidiaries, in particular the country's largest power grid operator Enedis. The political action took place following the government's recent decision to open the country's railway sector, currently monopolised by the SNCF railway company, to competition.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Air France dispute continues**

*June 9, 2018*

Trade unions at Air France called for a four-day strike starting 23 June over a continuing pay dispute that prompted the resignation of parent company Air France-KLM's chief executive in May 2017. He announced his resignation after the workforce at the carrier's French operations rejected a pay deal aimed at ending weeks of strikes. The dispute has already resulted in 15 days of walkouts this year.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Germany

### **Merger of Thyssenkrupp and Tata Steel comes nearer**

*June 30, 2018*

Thyssenkrupp's supervisory board concluded a planned merger of the company's steelmaking business with India's Tata to create the second-largest steelmaker in Europe. The two firms will each have a 50% share in the new company called Thyssenkrupp Tata Steel, which will be headquartered in the Netherlands, and employ 48,000 people at 34 sites worldwide. The decision follows two years of negotiations and initially met strong resistance from trade union IG Metall after Thyssenkrupp announced that it would cut around 2,000 jobs as part of the deal. The union reversed its position after the company gave workplace assurances and guaranteed it would not close down German plants. That agreement was accepted with an overwhelming majority of the workforce.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read on: [in German ...](#)

### **Minimum wage developments**

*June 27, 2018*

The country plans to increase minimum wage to 9.19 euro an hour in 2019 and further to 9.35 euro in 2020. Chancellor Angela Merkel's government introduced a national minimum wage of 8.50 euro an hour for more than 3 million workers in 2015. Minimum wage was last raised in 2017, to the current 8.84 euro. Eurofound analysis shows that the minimum wage policy introduced in 2015 significantly lifted the wages of the lowest-paid employees, particularly the lower-skilled, younger ones or those working in services. The beneficial effects of the minimum wage policy on real wage growth and the wage cohesion of the workforce seem to have come at no significant price. Employment data show the employment prospects of those employees who have benefited more from the introduction of the minimum wage have not deteriorated. These conclusions are confirmed by the latest report of the Minimum Wage Committee.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) Read on: [in English \(2\) ...](#) The Eurofound paper: [in English ...](#) The Minimum Wage Committee report: [in German ...](#)

### **Ryanair pilots to vote on strike**

*June 21, 2018*

About 400 Ryanair pilots are preparing to vote on a 'long-term' strike after the company refused to meet their demands and the workers representatives of the VC Ryanair Company Council left the negotiation board. The Council followed the steps of the Irish Air Line Pilots' Association, their counterpart abroad, who also left the negotiation board with the company and called its members for voting over a possible strike. The pilots ask for a pay raise and improved working conditions, like getting paid on sick days or having stable work schedules and a pension retirement system. In a newsletter the council said that it was come to the conclusion that management does not seem to want to change anything after agreeing to recognise unions.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Greece

### **Hospital workers protest austerity**

*June 25, 2018*

Members of the union of Greek hospital workers, POEDIN, blocked the entrance to the finance ministry in protest against austerity. Crying out slogans against austerity, the protesters obstructed employees from entering the building. POEDIN is demanding the revocation of pay cuts and permanent status for staff on short-term contracts.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#)

### **Strikes and protest affect public transport**

*June 14, 2018*

On 14 June 2018, trade unions marched in the centre of Athens to protest against the draft bill on a package of measures demanded by the countries' creditors to complete the fourth program review. Bus, metro and trolley bus services were disrupted by work stoppages. Public transport workers also held strike actions earlier this month. Work stoppages on 7 June 2018 and a 24-hour strike on 8 June in Athens and the broader Attica Region. Workers on the same metro line held work stoppages. The strikes were also organised to protest against the government's various proposed and adopted reforms.

Read on: [in English \(1\)...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

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## Hungary

### **Police violated article 11 European Convention of Human Rights**

*June 7, 2018*

Judges of the European Court of Human Rights ruled that police violated article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which confers the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, including for trade unions, without restriction other than those prescribed by national law in the interests of national security or public safety. The violation of human rights took place in 2012 when the police blocked a protest at Budapest Ferenc Liszt airport and prevented the United Civil Aviation Trade Union's right to free assembly. The court ordered to pay the union's costs, it held that the finding of the violation itself was sufficient just satisfaction of the union's damages.

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## Iceland

### **Workers whaling company forbidden to join union**

*June 21, 2018*

Workers within the whaling company Hvalur hf. have been told by the company that they may not join a trade union that recently won a back-wages cases against them in court. The union lawyers believe this measure is illegal and filed a complaint against Hvalur hf. stating that the ban on trade union membership is completely illegal in the context of the country's existing laws on labour unions and the right of association.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Ireland

### **Month of strikes at Lloyd's pharmacies**

*June 28, 2018*

After work stoppages earlier this month, workers at the Lloyd's Pharmacy chain say they will escalate their industrial action with three full-day stoppages in July unless management engages with their trade union Mandate. Mandate said the company had refused to negotiate with the union. Lloyds Pharmacy said it already negotiated with an in-house Colleague Representative Council. Mandate union represents 220 of the company's 800 retail workers and drivers. The union is demanding a pay increase and incremental pay scales, a sick pay scheme, security of hours with no zero-hour contracts, and improved annual leave and public holiday entitlements.

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### **Roscommon County Council strikes for family-friendly work practices**

*June 26, 2018*

Staff at Roscommon County Council staged several strikes in support of family-friendly work practices. Hundreds of trade union members and supporters marched through Roscommon in solidarity with the county workers. The dispute is over council management's refusal to halt its effective ban on flexi-leave in the county council, in defiance of Labour Court rulings. Trade union Fórsa says it's now over 12 months since any Roscommon council worker was approved for flexi-leave.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Italy

### **The system of collective bargaining assessed**

*June 14, 2018*

A research paper analyses the most important features of the country's collective bargaining system, together with its historical developments. The paper examines the legal framework, the structure of the system and the transnational dimension of collective bargaining. According to the author, the increasing integration of markets and rapidly evolving entrepreneurial needs have led to ever greater flexibilisation of national labour regulations, bringing about major changes in the collective bargaining systems in Europe.

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### **Air traffic controllers on strike**

*June 8, 2018*

Air traffic controllers went on a four-hour strike on 8 June while negotiations on a renewal of their collective labour agreement, which expired on 31 December 2016, remain deadlocked. The air traffic controllers stopped their work amidst the busiest time of the week. Many flights were cancelled due to the strike. Airline

Alitalia has been most affected by the strike with more than 100 cancellations. A new 24-hour strike has been announced on the 5 July, from midnight-midnight.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

## **Ryanair signed first ever cabin crew recognition agreement**

*June 6, 2018*

Ryanair has signed the first non-pilot agreement after the company decided earlier to recognise trade unions for the first time in the company's 32-year-old history. The agreement allows cabin crew to negotiate on issues such as pay. The agreement with the unions is paving the way for the Irish LCC to represent its directly employed cabin crew.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Latvia**

### **Wages increased 8.6% compared to last year**

*June 1, 2018*

According to data from the Central Statistical Bureau, the average monthly gross wages and salaries for full-time work grew by 8.6% or 76 euro compared to 2017. Earnings in the private sector rose faster than in the public sector. The increase of the minimum wage from 380 to 430 euro, introduction of progressive income tax, and the changes in the size of non-taxable minimum earlier this year had the most notable influence on the changes in average wages and salaries.

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## **Liechtenstein**

### **PostAuto tendered with savings on labour costs**

*June 21, 2018*

In a 2011 tender, the price difference between the PostAuto offer and the competing company was just over 2%. To win the tender PostAuto cut on labour costs by worsening working conditions. Apparently PostAuto management stated to the employees that its businesses in Liechtenstein and France could only be sustained with money from the Swiss parent PostAuto Schweiz. Personnel was told they also had to make a contribution. According to a former bus driver of the company, management shortened the entry and exit times of chauffeurs leading to up to 20 minutes unpaid working time at the expense of the driver. At the same time, the pause rules had been deleted in the employment contracts and the individual working shifts have been shortened meaning that for a 6-day week of 42 hours drivers have to be present 60 to 65 hours.

Read on: [in German ...](#)

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## **Lithuania**

### **Additional 95 million euro for teachers' wages**

*June 12, 2018*

After changes to the payment system, an additional 95 million euro will be allocated for teachers' wages. At the moment around 32,500 teachers work in the general education system on a budget of 380 million euro. The extra money is allocated to provide for the hours when there is activity that's not been paid for so far.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Luxembourg**

### **Collective agreement at Luxair**

June 30, 2018

Luxair signed a collective agreement with trade unions OGBL and NGL-SNEP. Under the agreement workers will earn a single bonus of 600 euro. A new profit sharing bonus will also be introduced, which means that all employees will receive an additional payment that is calculated in relation to the company's profitability. The Luxembourg Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (LCGB) has not signed the new agreement.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Economic growth, wages and inequality**

June 29, 2018

The statistical office Statec came up with publications that provide an overview of the distribution of the recent economic growth. Over the 2003-2015 period, the wealthiest households benefited more from the fruits of economic growth. The growth was therefore not equally distributed over rich and poor. The analysis shows that inequality cannot be summarised only by the indices of inequality or risk of poverty, because these are too global. After 2013, the redistribution has become more equal. In a report, dedicated to the recent economic evolution, it is said that average wages increased 2.8% in 2017, and are expected to increase with 1.9% in 2018 and 2.7% in 2019.

Read on: [in French ...](#) Read on: [in French ...](#)

### **Social plan at Nordea bank**

June 13, 2018

After weeks of negotiations, the trade unions concluded a social plan for Nordea Bank's division that was presented in a joint statement. ALEBA, LCGB and OGBL, the trade unions for financial services, reached an agreement with the management. The bank will drop initial plans to use a capping system to compensate nearly 150 staff members, who stand to lose jobs when Nordea's private banking operations are transferred to Swiss bank UBS.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read on: [in French ...](#)

### **Health care sector prepares for strike**

June 8, 2018

Negotiations a new collective agreement on salaries and benefits for health sector workers that has been going on for years remains deadlocked. Trade union OGBL have organised a strike committee that is preparing for a strike. According to the OGBL their demands (including a salary rise and upgrading of careers) would only be accepted in return for worse working times.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Malta

### **Teachers union clashes with church**

June 23, 2018

The Malta Union of Teachers (MUT) declared a trade dispute after months of negotiations with the Secretariat for Catholic Education have failed. According to the union their demands to bring working conditions of teaching grades in church schools in line with state schools are not being met by the church schools. The Secretariat for Catholic Education states that it is surprised that the MUT declared an industrial dispute while the Secretariat of Catholic Educations wants to resolve the issues at hand.

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## Netherlands

### **Public transport strike: still no agreement in sight**

June 26, 2018

The regional transport strike, organised together by trade unions FNV and CNV is still going on with no agreement in sight. The ongoing dispute focusses mainly around wages and the right to have regular

bathroom breaks (see our April and May newsletter). After new rounds of negotiations not led to a breakthrough in the collective bargaining process, an all-out strike was announced. After a few smaller regional strikes were organised earlier this month, a nationwide strike was held from 27 June to 2 July.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Union FNV takes Deliveroo to court**

*June 15, 2018*

Trade union FNV is taking Deliveroo to court for paying its delivery staff as if they are self-employed while in fact they are not. The union claims the riders are employed by Deliveroo. The union states that Deliveroo is using a fake self-employment set-up in order to pay less for their work than they would if they hired them as employees. Deliveroo doesn't have to pay social insurances for so-called 'freelancers', neither it has to guarantee them fixed hours.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Union settles lawsuit for temporary workers**

*June 7, 2018*

An agreement was reached between trade union FNV and the temporary employment agency *In Person* on the equal pay of over 400 parcel sorters. The parcel sorters were temporary agency workers who worked for PostNL, a mail and parcel solutions firm. The more than 400 temporary agency workers will be paid by 1 July 2018, according to the PostNL collective labour agreement. In December 2017, FNV alleged that both PostNL and the In Person were liable for the underpayment the temporary workers who sort packages at PostNL's parcel depots. The employees were not paid according to the PostNL collective labour agreement.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Norway

### **Possible summer strike oil workers union**

*June 22, 2018*

Industri Energi, the biggest trade union that represents some 4.000 workers on offshore oil drilling rigs, concluded a new wage deal last month. The Safe union, a smaller involved union with 2250 members still had to ask its members to decide whether they accept the deal (see our May newsletter). The members of the Safe union now voted against the new wage deal and hold on to their demand for better wages. Safe union warned that drilling and catering staff who work on oil producing platforms could go on strike this summer.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Bill should improve jobs**

*June 4, 2018*

On the 4 June, the parliament passed a Working Environment Act for better job security. The bill provides a clear definition of permanent employment, ensures the predictability of work and income by avoiding on-call contracts and limits the use of staffing agencies by restricting the use to companies bound by a nationwide collective agreement with a union. The Labour Inspection gets the legal authority to inspect companies and impose sanctions in the event of illegal staffing agency use.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Poland

### **Labour market tightens**

*June 29, 2018*

According to data from the Central Statistics Office, the number of job vacancies increased with 28.3% in the first quarter of 2018 when compared to the same period in 2017. The total number of job vacancies stood at 152,400 in the first quarter, an increase of 33,600 from the same period in 2017. Unemployment stood at 6.1% in May, which is the lowest in history for the month of May. Wages during the same period increased

with 6.2% when compared to the same period last year. The office expects a continuation of the tightening of the labour market as unemployment falls and wages rise.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Portugal

### **Massive support for nurses' strike**

*June 28, 2018*

A national strike that was called by the Union of Portuguese Nurses (SEP) had an extremely high participation rate. The union spoke about figures of between 70 percent and 90 percent in various healthcare institutions. The main demand was more staff be hired to cope with the impact of the shift to a working week of 35 hours, from 40 hours. According to the union it is necessary to hire more nurses. Up to 2,000 nurses will be needed to compensate the working time reduction in weekly timetables.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Civil servants reiterate demand for 4% pay rise**

*June 28, 2018*

The unions that represent the country's civil servants reiterated its demand for a 4% increase in salaries and pensions next year. The unions also want to agree on a minimum increase of 60 euro a month for lower-paid workers. According to the unions the boost in salaries and pensions is necessary given that they have been frozen since 2009 which resulted in an 18.9% loss in purchasing power.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Agreement halts further railway strikes**

*June 23, 2018*

After strikes earlier this month that affected about 85 percent of the services in the country further strikes were announced that are now suspended because an agreement has been reached. The workers were on strike in protest against the possibility of trains having just a single crew member on board. The labour conflict now seems to be resolved with an agreement on railway safety/single agent matters that was signed between the State Office for Infrastructure and the trade unions.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

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## Romania

### **Court bans Uber**

*June 28, 2018*

A specialised tribunal of Cluj banned the 'unfair competition practices' of ridesharing company Uber. The court referred to practices to provide transport services without holding the legal authorisations. The court's decision is not final and the company has 30 days to use the right of appeal. The case against Uber was opened in 2016 by an association of taxi companies. A draft bill, which was formulated in April by the government, foresees that ridesharing services require authorisation from local authorities in the cities where they operate. Earlier this month, the National Supervisory Authority for Personal Data Processing fined Uber with RON 200,000 (43,000 euro) for failing to notify the authority about a security incident that may have affected the personal data of some 30,000 local clients.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) Read on: [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **First quarter sees 12.7% increase in hourly wages**

*June 5, 2018*

According to the National Statistics Institute (INS) the hourly labour costs, adjusted by the number of working days, recorded a 12.7% increase in the first quarter of 2018 versus the same period of last year. The highest increase in hourly pay rates was in the construction sector (19.1% up), The mining industry is the only one that recorded a 5% drop in hourly labour costs compared to 2017.

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## Serbia

### **Annual review of labour relations and social dialogue**

*June 2, 2018*

The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's department in the country published its annual review of labour relations and social dialogue. The report presents socio-economic development and the evolution at the level of industrial relations and collective bargaining and the reasons for the crisis in that area. Furthermore, the report shows that social dialogue is still very weak on all levels. Trade unions are still not participating in drafting and implementing economic and social policies. The absence of social dialogue has resulted in strikes.

Read on: [in English \(the report\) ...](#)

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## Slovakia

### **Wages on the increase**

*June 26, 2018*

The finance ministry published a report that announce a substantial pay increase. The economy will speed up and gain 4.1 per cent in 2018. The boost is expected to be driven by household consumption and private investment. Nominal wage growth is set to be the fastest since the crisis, thus adding to the inflation pressures. 40 thousand new jobs will push the unemployment rate below 7 per cent. In the coming year, the economic growth will further accelerate as the automotive sector stays firm. The new macroeconomic forecast has a positive impact on tax bases throughout the medium-term horizon.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Pay rise at Peugeot: strike called off**

*June 14, 2018*

Workers organised in trade union KOVO PCAS were angry that wages at Peugeot - with a monthly average of 1106 euro - were the lowest of the three major carmakers in the country and threatened to go on strike (see our May newsletter). After it became clear that a majority of the members was not in favour of industrial action, the union settled a compromise accepting a 50 euro a month basic pay rise. They originally demanded a monthly basic pay rise of 80 euro. Besides the monthly rise in basic income, workers will receive an individual monthly bonus of 100 euro.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Slovenia

### **Labour shortages in hospitality**

*June 27, 2018*

The Hospitality and Tourism Trade Union and the Chamber of Commerce stated that there is a huge shortage of workers in the hospitality sector, even though the peak tourist season hasn't even begun yet. A number of tourism establishments are looking to hire foreign waiters, chefs, chambermaids, and receptionists. According to the union, one of the main reasons for the shortage is the fact that the work is too hard, while the wages are too low. The union also criticises the precarious nature of the jobs. Labour inspectors say that employers in hospitality and tourism are among the biggest violators of labour laws. Figures released by the Employment Service show that waiters are in short supply.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Further railway strikes suspended: deal in sight**

*June 19, 2018*



The trade union of railway workers - the biggest of ten unions at the national railway operator, organised a first strike earlier this month and announced more strikes to follow later. The union demanded a 10% pay rise and equal treatment of all workers. The other unions signed an annex to the collective agreement that did not meet these demands. The trade union of railway workers now suspended their plans for further strikes after talks with the management came close to a solution and an agreement came in sight.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Spain

### **New talks to prevent air controllers' strike**

*June 28, 2018*

Air-Traffic Controllers' Union (USCA) threatened to call a strike in July and August if the government did not meet their demands. The workers planning to strike are employed at airports on the east coast of Spain and the Balearics, including those that service popular tourist destinations such as El Prat Airport in Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca Airport, Ibiza Airport and Menorca Airport. After a last-minute meeting was set up in a last attempt to prevent the strikes government revealed that the two sides might come to an agreement.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Agreement ends indefinite strike at warehouse H&M**

*June 21, 2018*

Nine days after the start of the indefinite strike, the workers' assembly of H & M has approved the agreement reached by the unions with the management and decided to call off their strike. The agreement includes significant salary improvements. The entire workforce will see salary increases and the salary difference that exists between a large part of the workforce will be cut, with the lowest salaries benefiting the most. Furthermore, employees will receive 35% extra salary per hour when working night-time.

Read on: [in Spanish ...](#)

### **Landmark decision against Deliveroo**

*June 4, 2018*

A Valencia court ruled against takeaway firm Deliveroo over labour rights it should have granted a former worker. The case is the first in the country to assess the delivery company's business model. The court rules that the worker was used by Deliveroo as a 'fake self-employed worker' when he should have been a permanent employee. A report by the Labour Inspectorate of Valencia had stated that Deliveroo riders should be considered as employees because the company 'controls the entire production process', from the hours the employee has to work to the tasks he or she has to do.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Tourism workers march for new collective agreement**

*June 4, 2018*

Over one thousand tourism workers marched more than 60 kilometres from Marbella to Malaga on 22-25 May in support of their demand for a new collective agreement. The collective agreement expired in December 2017. Negotiations in 2017 didn't lead to anything with both parties being miles apart from each other. The employer is insisting on weakening employment rights and increasing outsourcing and precarious employment. Unions on the other hand, are demanding pay increases. They say the sector generates high profits while wages and conditions have deteriorated dramatically for many workers. The unions are planning further action to bring employers back to the negotiating table.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Sweden

### **Earnings report shows gender gap**

June 14, 2018

A report, from recruiting agency Jurek, concluded that female job applicants both ask for and receive lower salaries than their male peers. The report also shows that candidates with foreign-sounding names are typically offered lower pay. The authors speak about discrepancies, which are creating an 'unsustainable situation' on the labour market. The report, which was based on 1,875 interviews with job candidates during 2018, concluded that male natives earn more than their female peers or those with non-Swedish names, even taking into account job role, level of education, and experience.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The report: [in Swedish ...](#)

### **Joint legislative proposal on strikes**

June 5, 2018

The social partners negotiated an agreement that can lead to a modification of the right to take solidarity action. The legislative proposal concluded by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and the trade union confederations LO, TCO and Saco starts from the presumption that employers who have signed a collective agreement should be able to trust that the peace obligation stands. Observers see the deal as a result of the usual pattern in the labour market: the negotiations take place in the shadow of the law. When the government 'threatens' to legislate on issues that are central to the social partners' autonomy, they come to terms on a solution. The proposal was presented on 5th June to the Minister for Employment.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Switzerland

### **Construction workers demonstrate and threaten with autumn strikes**

June 23, 2018

Around 18000 construction workers took it to the streets to demonstrate the proposals to scrap the current retirement age of 60 for the industry. Unions threatened with strikes for the building sector this autumn if the retirement age for construction workers will indeed be increased.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Railway workers demonstrate against cuts**

June 18, 2018

Across several cities 1,400 rail workers took part in protests against a package of cuts and reforms planned by the Swiss Federal Railways. The railway workers are demanding a softening of proposed wage cuts and liberalisation of firing procedures. The current negotiations on changes to the collective agreement started in February and are expected to continue until September. The rail workers' union promised further action if their position was not more considered.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Turkey

### **Pressure on Yves Rocher to reinstate employees**

June 28, 2018

Pressure is growing on Yves Rocher to make sure sacked workers are reinstated. A total of 124 workers at Yves Rocher's subsidiary, Kosan Kozmetik have been dismissed after joining a trade union (see our May newsletter). All the dismissal cases were immediately taken into the judicial process since the termination of contracts due to union membership is unjustified. The workers that were sacked organised picket lines outside the plant to demand their jobs back. All of the workers still in their job who have shown support for the dismissed colleagues are now being sent on compulsory leave.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Collective bargaining at local contact centre Lufthansa**

June 5, 2018

Trade union Sosyal-IS, that represents the majority of the contact centre workers, started negotiating a collective agreement at the local contact centre of German airline Lufthansa. The Lufthansa contact centre employs 268 workers and provides customer service to clients in Turkish, German and English. The union said that it wants to make sure that basic labour standards are respected in Lufthansa's global supply chain.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#)

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## United Kingdom

### **Court action and negotiations at Deliveroo**

June 28, 2018

A group of 50 Deliveroo couriers reached a settlement with the company on a six-figure claim sum from the takeaway delivery firm in a dispute over employment rights. The riders were represented by the law firm Leigh Day. They argued that they had been unlawfully denied rights, including the legal minimum wage and paid holiday, after being labelled self-employed contractors. Earlier this month, the Independent Workers Union has been given the greenlight for a high court challenge over the employment rights of the Deliveroo riders. The IWGB wants the court to overturn a ruling that confirmed the self-employed status of those working for the delivery firm. Furthermore, the union sees it as a problem that the riders, as independent contractors, are denied basic employment rights including a guaranteed minimum wage and holiday pay.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Workers confronted with a class ceiling**

June 19, 2018

Half of UK workers believe a regional accent and a working-class background are barriers to success, according to a study that revealed working class representation in leadership roles is as low as 17%. The study was commissioned by the former education secretary Justine Greening, who said working class people still believed they encountered a 'class ceiling' with too much emphasis placed on personal connections more likely to suit middle class candidates. About half of the 2,000 people surveyed across industries and regions said those without strong regional accents found it easier to progress in their workplace.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Plea for renaissance of bargaining**

June 10, 2018

According to the Progressive Policy Think Tank IPPR, achieving better wages and working conditions as part of a new growth model will require a renaissance of collective bargaining and a growth in trade union membership. The decline of the union movement has contributed to a growing imbalance of power in the economy, and a consequent decline in the share of national income going to labour and an increase in inequality. In the report *Power to the people*, the IPPR states, based on key propositions, that stronger unions can deliver economic justice.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Million NHS workers vote in favour of 6.5% pay deal**

June 8, 2018

A majority of the NHS workers voted in favour of a 6.5% pay deal. Members of 13 unions in England accepted the deal to end 1% pay cap, only the GMB union rejected the deal. Over 1 million hospital cleaners, nurses, security guards, physiotherapists, emergency call handlers, paramedics, midwives, radiographers and other NHS staff that voted in favour of the deal will now get the money in their July pay packets, backdated from April. The deal means an average 6.5% increase over a three-year period with more for the low-paid, through a combination of cost-of-living pay rises and faster incremental increases. Lower-paid staff will get an immediate 2,000 pounds increase, taking them above the living wage and no one will get paid an hourly wage below 8.93 pounds.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Youngsters stuck at the start**

June 4, 2018

A TUC-report identifies five issues that young workers face in getting ahead at work. The report concludes that young people are getting a raw deal at work. Low pay, disproportionately affected by wage stagnation, insecure work, few opportunities to progress and a feeling that nothing will change often dominate their working lives. But this is through no fault of their own. Many of the barriers facing young workers are structural and outside of their control.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The report: [in English ...](#)

For more information, please contact Jan Cremers or Sanne van der Gaag, Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (AIAS) [cbn-aias@uva.nl](mailto:cbn-aias@uva.nl) or the Head of communications at the ETUI, Steve Coulter [scoulter@etui.org](mailto:scoulter@etui.org). For previous full issues of the *Collective bargaining newsletter* please visit [www.etui.org/E-Newsletters/Collective-bargaining-newsletter](http://www.etui.org/E-Newsletters/Collective-bargaining-newsletter) or consult the archive with all articles in our database at [www.cbnarchive.eu](http://www.cbnarchive.eu).

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