

collective bargaining

Issue 9/2018 September

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.



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European sources

Disputes at Ryanair continue

September 28, 2018

The fight for better working conditions of pilots and crew members at Ryanair culminated in a series of industrial actions (see our July/ August newsletter). Although some results were achieved, trade unions have announced a 24-hour strike for 28 September. Eight unions in five European countries called on their pilot members to participate in the strike action. Italy's Uiltrasporti and FILT-CGIL, Portugal's SNPVAC,

Belgium's CNE/LBC, Spain's SITCPLA and USO, and VNV and FVN in the Netherlands. Besides the pilots, other crew in Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Portugal will join the industrial action that forces Ryanair to cancel 190 flights.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) [in English \(3\)](#)

Working conditions for European platform workers

September 25, 2018

A Eurofound report explores the working and employment conditions of three of the most common types of platform work in Europe. Based on interviews with platform workers, the physical and social environment of platform work, autonomy, employment status and access to social protection, and earnings and taxation are assessed. A comparative analysis of the regulatory frameworks applying to platform work in 18 EU Member States accompanies this review. It looks into workers' employment status, the formal relationships between clients, workers and platforms, and the organisation and representation of workers and platforms. Key findings include that European countries do not regulate the employment status of platform workers. Although the workers have limited control over their working time and the organisation of their work, they are often considered as self-employed and therefore lack social protection.

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

Labour market and wage data

September 24, 2018

According to the Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion ESDE Quarterly Review, the EU's economy continued its expansion in the first half of 2018, yet slightly less dynamically than in 2017. Since the beginning of 2018, the pace of economic growth has moderated, and most recent survey indicators point to lower sentiment and higher uncertainty. Section 5 informs about the growth of real gross disposable household. In the first quarter of 2018 this growth reached 2.4 %, according to latest available estimates. In the following section (6) data on labour productivity and labour costs are provided. Nominal compensation per employee has been growing at a moderate from the first quarter of 2017.

Download here: [in English ...](#)

ILO-study on working conditions at five micro-task platforms

September 20, 2018

The ILO presents one of the first comparative studies of working conditions on five major micro-task platforms that operate globally. Micro-task platforms are a type of web-based labour platform that provide businesses and other clients with access to a large, flexible workforce for the completion of mostly clerical tasks, that can be completed remotely using a computer with internet connection. The study is based on an ILO survey covering 3,500 workers in 75 countries around the world and other qualitative surveys and analyses the working conditions on these micro-task platforms, including pay rates, work availability and intensity, social protection coverage and work–life balance. One of the major findings of the study is that micro-task platforms are in no way regulated by any government, compensation for this type of platform work is often lower than minimum wages, workers must manage unpredictable income streams and they work without the standard labour protections of an employment relationship.

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

Collective bargaining and wage inequality

September 6, 2018

The European Tariff Report of the Hans Böckler Stiftung reveals that wages in the EU are rising in nominal terms. However, as the inflation has returned from an extremely low level to a normal level in 2017, average real wages only increased by 0.4%. In 9 out of 28 European Union countries real wages even fell. According to the research, inequality a higher coverage of collective agreements is essential in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth and to combat. Countries with low wage inequality, especially Sweden, Belgium, Finland and Denmark, achieve this through high collective bargaining coverage and strong centralisation of collective bargaining. Wage inequality is significantly higher in Eastern Europe, where comparable collective bargaining is often lacking. In Romania, Bulgaria and Latvia, the salaries of high-earners are at least 4 times higher than those of low-paid workers, compared with a factor of 2.3 in Sweden.

Read the Report: [in German ...](#)

Austria

Union: planned labour market policy promotes bogus self-employment

September 27, 2018

According to the chair of the building and woodworkers union GBH, the planned reform of the social security, will lead to a decrease of the control on compliance and regularity in the sector. Especially in the construction sector, it is of the utmost importance that there is a decent control, for instance, whether someone is genuinely self-employed. The reform is an open invitation to circumvent regulatory.

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

Metalworkers union demands 5% pay increase

September 20, 2018

The metalworkers unions started negotiations on a new collective agreement demanding a 5% pay increase, or at least 100 euro a month more in wages. On 20 September, they handed over their demands that are based on the steady growth of productivity and other very positive results in recent years. Another point of concern is the much criticized 12-hour working that was introduced by the government. The metalworkers unions want to make sure that workers cannot be forced to work twelve-hour a day, so they demand higher overtime pay than before and a 100% bonus if metalworkers have to work for more than 10 hours a day.

Read on: [in German ...](#) The start of the negotiations: [in German ...](#)

Belgium

Civil servants protest against holiday and sick pay reform

September 29, 2018

Civil servant that work for the federal authorities staged a protest against proposals to, amongst other things, reform the rules governing their sick pay entitlement. The reform introduces rules that enable workers no longer to save 21 sick days and transfer them to their holiday and sick pay on full pay entitlement for the following year. The changes apply to federal civil servants and the 'special corps' that include the police, the fire service, military personnel and those working for courts of law. Members of the Civil Protection Agency and fire fighters marched in their uniforms.

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

Lack of consultation leads to strike at seaports

September 19, 2018

The unions that represent the workers employed by the Flemish Maritime Services Department staged a day of industrial action against the responsible ministry's reform plans. All the region's maritime pilots downed tools and at least 8 locks on Flemish canals were closed to traffic. The workers' strike was in protest to government reforms that will affect sick pay. With the new plan workers will get payed 65% of their wages when they are sick for more than 30 days. The unions find it unacceptable that a reform of the conditions of employment of workers is planned without first having consulted with their union representatives.

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

Bulgaria

Union wants minimum non-taxable income

September 14, 2018

The Confederation of Trade Unions in Bulgaria (CITUB) has put forward a proposal to introduce a minimum non-taxable income at the level of the national minimum wage. The minimum non-taxable income means

less tax from low income groups and will increase their consumption power. According to CITUB this new policy could help to reduce inequality, pointing out that the country has a Gini coefficient higher than 40%.

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

Croatia

Minimum wage increases

September 10, 2018

The Social-Economic Council has agreed to set the net hourly minimum wage for 2019 at 155 Dinar (1.30 euro). Currently, the net minimum wage in Serbia is 143 Dinar. After the Council's meeting it was said that this increase is the result of compromises made by 'all sides'. The increase will be accompanied by other agreed measures.

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

Shipbuilders end strike after pay promises

September 2, 2018

The 4500 workers at Uljanik group that went on strike in August to protest unpaid salaries and bad management in the company (see our July/August newsletter) were finally paid. The workers at the countries' largest shipbuilding group received their unpaid wages for July and ended their 10-day strike. After workers came to the capital Zagreb where they protested in front of the government building the government stated that it had found a model to help workers and pay them salaries for July and August.

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

Cyprus

48-hours strike might lead to breakthrough

September 24, 2018

Teachers have been acting against government proposals that include reduction in the off-class hours for the class supervisor from two to one and a reduction in the teaching periods (see our July/ August newsletter). Teachers' union leaders decided to strike action because of rash decisions harming the quality of education and called out a 48-hour strike that affected thousands of students. Unions now seem to have accepted a proposal by opposition party Diko for an interim deal with the government to put an end to the crisis in public education. It remains unclear if the government will also go along with this proposal.

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

Czechia

Tripartite agreement on the budget 2019

September 19, 2018

The coalition government, employers and trade union leaders have jointly approved the priorities outlined in the government's draft budget for 2019. The Finance Ministry proposed a state budget with a 40 billion crown deficit, that envisages a substantial improvement of public sector wages, higher pensions and more money for investments. The government aims to scrap 1300 jobs in public administration. However, the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic and the Czech Chamber of Commerce criticized the fact that wage increases to public servants will be higher than to those working in the private sector.

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

Healthcare unions demand 10% pay rise

September 10, 2018

The healthcare trade unions rejected an offer for a 5% pay rise, holding on to their demand for a 10% pay rise. In July 2018 the unions already called a strike alert. They have declared that if their demands are not

met they are ready to turn to industrial action. For now, this would effectively mean that the union would call on doctors and nurses to stop doing over-time. Such actions would be widely felt as many hospitals admit that due to a shortage of staff they are forcing doctors and nurses to take more overtime hours than the Labour Code abides.

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

Wage increase documented

September 4, 2018

Data released by the statistical office CZSO show an increase of 8.6% in average wages in the second quarter of 2018, compared to the same period of 2017. The monthly average gross nominal wage reached CZK 31,851, CZK 2,515 more than the same period in 2017. In Q2 2018, the median wage reached CZK 27,236. The median wage has increased by 9.4% compared to the same period of the previous year. With a 2.3% increase in consumer prices, the growth of average wages was at a rate of 6.2% in real terms.

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

Denmark

Supreme court ratifies fines Uber drivers

September 18, 2018

The supreme court has ratified fines that were charged to four Uber drivers for failing to have permits and violating laws that the country introduced to regulate Uber. The laws were implemented in February 2017 in response to protests that Uber creates an unfair competition by not following the legal standards that are required for established taxi firms. Nowadays Uber drivers must have seat sensors and fare meters in their cars. The drivers are also obliged to have official permits to transport passengers. The supreme court's verdict is paving the way for similar fines on a further 1,500 drivers. Trade union 3F stated to be pleased with the supreme courts' decision but calls for authorities to pursue Uber itself and not just its drivers.

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

Tackling social dumping

September 7, 2018

Labour shortages in many sectors of the labour market make employers increasingly looking for workers outside of the country's borders. Trade unions worry about this development, fearing an increase in social dumping unless stricter controls of foreign employments are introduced. There are two instruments used to tackle social dumping. First of all, collective agreements have included new regulations which allow insight into foreign workers' wages and terms of employment. Secondly, there is state control via the Working Environment Authority, registers and tax authorities.

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

Estonia

Police and border guard will get 10% wage increase

September 19, 2018

Government reaches an agreement on next years' state budget. It will exceed 11 billion euro; 21 million euro will be used for an average wage increase of 10% for police officers and border guards. Government officials declared that salaries of front-line employees, foremost patrol police officers and border guards, will increase the most. The budget bill is still to be approved.

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

Government meets with unions and employers to discuss wage gap

September 19, 2018

The tradition of tripartite meetings that for many years did not take place in the country was restored last spring as a procedure to discuss labour market problems. In September, government, unions and employers

met again, this time to discuss the countries' gender wage gap that still is one of the widest in the European Union. Several topics were discussed such as the flexibility of employment and lifelong learning.

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

Finland

Unions do not accept easing of redundancy

September 29, 2018

Trade unions announced that they are prepared to take measures if a government amendment that will make it easier to dismiss individuals for companies with less than 20 employees is tabled. According to the unions this has a major impact on workers as 97 % of companies have less than 20 employees and a total of 36% of the countries' workforce are working in companies with less than 20 employees. The Transport Workers' Union (AKT) announced an overtime work stoppage for several of its industries which will affect trucking, bus conductors, bus station enterprises, car repair shops and road tanker transport. The industrial workers will join service, food, and electric workers in a 24-hour strike on 3 October in their protest.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) [in English \(3\) ...](#)

Fight against unfair competition in construction

September 7, 2018

With considerable differences in wages in the construction sector, compared to, for instance, neighbouring country Estonia, many workers enter to look for a job. Construction companies use this situation by paying workers only a fraction of the normal wages. To be able to tackle this issue, a cross-country cooperation was set up on multiple levels. The countries now work together on government level, where Estonian inspectors also take part in inspections. The unions work together providing them with information on legal salaries and trade union rights. And a law, backed by both employers and unions, was imposed that demands everyone that is on a construction site to be carrying a visible ID card with an official tax reference number.

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

France

Job cuts in education lead to walk-out

September 26, 2018

The three main trade unions in education have expressed their dismay at the government's plans to cut jobs in middle and high schools. The trade unions FSU, UNSA-Education and SGEN-CFDT have called workers to strike on 12 November 2018, in a protest against the elimination of 2,650 posts in colleges and high schools planned by the government in 2019. This downsizing leads to a further deterioration of the study conditions and work of staff. The unions ask the government to give up the project.

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

Strike in protest of government policy

September 10, 2018

Several unions have announced a general strike on 9 October in a protest against the overall policy of the government. The main problems are related to the unemployment insurance, the staffing of the employment agencies and cuts in public services. The CGT and FO trade unions as well as two national student unions speak about ideological policies targeting the destruction of the social model, favouring notably the explosion of inequality and the breaking of collective rights.

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

Income inequality and the gender gap

September 5, 2018

A column that combines data from different sources to construct distributional national accounts shows the limits of the myth of egalitarianism. When compared to the United States, where inequality has skyrocketed,

the country can be considered an equalitarian country with a low level of inequality. The gender pay gap declined in recent decades, albeit fairly slow among top labour incomes (for example, the female share among top 0.1% earners was only 12% in 2012, compared with 7% in 1994 and 5% in 1970). But in-depth analysis leads to higher inequality levels than the usual tax-based series for the recent decades, because the latter miss a rising part of capital income.

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

Germany

Wage increase for workers at RHZ Handwerks-Zentrum

September 25, 2018

In a second round of negotiations, trade union IG BCE and employers agreed on a collective bargaining agreement for RHZ Handwerks-Zentrum GmbH's employees. Income will increase by three percent from January 1, 2019, and by two percent from October 1, 2019. Furthermore, members of the IG-BCE union receive a one-time payment of 300 euro in January 2019, trainees receive 150 euro.

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

Chemical workers finalise bargaining

September 20, 2018

Trade union IG BCE concluded a collective agreement for the chemical sector. According to the union, the overall package implies an improvement of working conditions and pay with 4.6%. The agreement brings the 580,000 workers in the sector a 3.6% pay increase, an on-off payment of 280 euro, a doubling of the holiday pay (to 1200 euro for full-timers and 1320 euro for full-time shift workers) and a roadmap that aims to improve the qualification and organisation of working time. The conditions for trainees are improved.

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

Strike at Ryanair upbeat for more strikes

September 12, 2018

A day before European unions announced a joint strike action of Ryanair workers in multiple countries (see our European section), pilots and cabin crew at the local Ryanair staged a full-day walkout. They demand better pay and better working conditions. Ryanair cancelled 150 out of a total 400 flights scheduled to fly to and from Germany due to the strike. Management warned that such 'wildcat' strikes would lead to job cuts if they continued. The Cockpit pilots' federation and the Verdi service workers' union said their talks with the Ryanair management had failed to break the impasse.

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

The effects of the introduction of a statutory minimum wage

September 4, 2018

A column describes how the implementation of the statutory minimum wage in 2015 has raised incomes in the lower part of the wage distribution without affecting employment of low-wage workers. Against the background of the evidence provided, the authors conclude that the recently agreed increase in the minimum wage to €9.35 by 2020 seems justifiable. Another report from the Hans Böckler Foundation indicates that the minimum wage introduction has tended to stimulate economic growth. This was mainly due to the higher wages of the minimum wage beneficiaries and a spill-over effect on adjacent wage groups. It benefitted in particular those whose low savings rate led to a strong increase in real private consumption.

Read the Column: [in English ...](#) The HBS-report: [in English ...](#)

Greece

Increase of minimum wage in sight

September 20, 2018

The parliament voted to speed up a process to increase the minimum wage next year - a pledge heralded by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras in late August. The amendment outlines a timeline for consultations between the government, employers and trade unions on what the increase will be, which will be completed by the end of the year. The new minimum wage will come into force in January 2019.

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

Seamen strike ends with pay deal

September 4, 2018

The PNO trade unions' seamen went on a two-day strike in the beginning of September 2018 (see our July/August newsletter). The two-day strike affected multiple routes from the mainland to the islands and whilst the tourist season was still going, the strike affected many travellers. After two days of strike the seamen decided to end the strike in return for a 2% pay increase. This was their first pay increase in eight years.

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

Hungary

Working life developments

September 10, 2018

In the Q2 report on working life developments Eurofound reports that the number of job vacancies rose to record highs and the vacancy rate is above EU average. It is reported that due to labour shortages some firms are unable to accept orders and businesses are relocating production sites abroad due to lack of personnel. Ongoing strong wage growth is helping labour conflicts to remain local and relatively mild. While industrial action in the business sector was moderate, there were tensions in the public sector. Especially amongst health workers, social workers and other public servants that did not benefit from earlier wage rises.

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

Iceland

Youngsters and migrants treated worst

September 10, 2018

According to trade union Efling the right of youngsters and migrant workers are violated more often than is the case with other workers in the country. This is partly so because they are primarily working in hospitality and construction, well-known offenders when it comes to employment rules. The union states that they often pay below minimum wage, or so-called equal wages, that they don't pay overtime and there often are other issues related to sick pay, and so on. The union has special attention for this kind of exploitation and started a campaign to reach out to people and going out into people's workplaces to target this problem.

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

Ireland

IKEA undermines workers' rights

September 28, 2018

Trade unions have accused furniture retail chain Ikea of undermining workers' rights in Ireland, the US and Portugal, and asked the Dutch government to mediate. The international UNI Global Union and other workers' groups including trade union Mandate said in a letter to the Dutch government's point of contact with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that Ikea Group had acted against OECD guidelines by not curbing anti-union conduct by managers in the three countries. Therefore, it is impossible to bargain in a climate free of fear and intimidation.

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

Nurses reject pay proposals

September 27, 2018

Members of the nurses unions are recommended to reject recent government pay proposals aimed at addressing staff shortages in the health service. The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) and the Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA) have recommended this. They say that the proposals do not address the serious recruitment and retention issues in the profession. Unions have not ruled out the possibility of industrial action. INMO union members will be balloted in October 2018 on whether to accept or reject the Government's proposals. If rejected, a ballot to strike will follow.

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

Civil servants get better pay proposal

September 24, 2018

Over 60,000 public servants who have been on lower pay rates since 2011 are set to receive pay increases worth on average €3,300 under proposals published by the Government. According to the minister of finance, the deal delivers a fair and affordable resolution. However, he warned unions that only remaining within the current public service pay agreement would benefit. The first increase is in March 2019, and the second in 2020. Workers who have been on lower pay for longest will see a double jump in March 2019. The unions stressed that any payments under these proposals constitute restoration, rather than wage increases. Their executives will consider the deal and decide whether to recommend it to members when they ballot.

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

Italy

Unions conclude deal with H&M

September 24, 2018

The trade union Filcams Cgil, Fisascat Cisl and Uiltucs concluded a company agreement with the fashion chain H & M. The deal involves more than 5,000 workers, working at over 150 H & M, Cos e & Other stores spread over 17 regions. The unions see this as a result of the offers the workers delivered to the consolidation of the fast fashion business model, after the collective redundancy procedure initiated at national level in May 2017 and the closure of some stores.

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

Purchase power decreased in 2017

September 21, 2018

The statistical office ISTAT published 2017 data on households' income. The national agency said that, while disposable gross income increased 1.6% in nominal terms, this translated into an increase of just 0.5% in terms of purchase power - down from 1.2% in 2016 and 1.3% in 2015. Consumer spending increased by 2.6%, causing a drop of 0.9 of a point of the propensity to save to 7.7%. In a summary of the 2018 report, with data on 2017, it is noted that income inequality and absolute poverty have increased. The latter, according to preliminary estimates in 2017, affects 6.9% of households and 8.3% of residents (from 6.3% and 7.9% in 2016, respectively), almost 1.8 million households and 5 million individuals in absolute terms.

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

Ilva agreement approved

September 19, 2018

Ilva Group workers - members of the trade unions Fim-Cisl, Fiom-Cgil and Uilm-Uil – approved by a very large majority of 93% the agreement concluded on 6 September between the Ministry of Economic Development, trade unions and ArcelorMittal. In total, Fim-Cisl, Fiom-Cgil and Uilm-Uil representing some 14,000 workers of the Ilva group, organised 44 assemblies at all the Ilva sites. The agreement leads to a planned 4.2 billion euro of investments for the revival of the steel industry, including 1.25 billion euro for industrial purposes, 1.15 billion euro for the environment and 1.8 billion euro as part of the acquisition.

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

Seasonal work in agriculture is precarious

September 16, 2018

The tomato industry has been accused of pushing migrants into 'conditions of absolute exploitation' (see also the July/August Newsletter). The agricultural sector is heavily reliant on migrant workers. According to official estimates, 161,000 foreign workers (16% of the total) are regularly employed in the agricultural sector in Southern Italy and at least as many are working without having been declared. Migrant worker, many of them irregularly employed, hand-pick tomatoes for high-tech processing plants, some of them in extremely exploitative conditions, for as little as 20 euro for 12 hours per day.

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

Latvia

Workers on hunger strike in social care centres

September 19, 2018

Employees of the social care centres have organised a hunger strike for eight hours in a protest against poor pay. The problem of low wages in social care centres has not been resolved for years, according to the trade unions of government agencies, local authorities, companies and financial workers. Informal carers in social care centres are still working on a minimum wage. Work is physically and morally very difficult, and in recent years the responsible ministry has done virtually nothing to improve the income situation.

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

Better wages for teachers

September 11, 2018

The Cabinet of Ministers decided to increase the minimum statutory salary of teachers with 30 euro to 710 euro, starting in September 2018. The increase fits in the government's timetable for increasing teachers' salaries from 1 September 2018 to 31 December 2022, which the government approved at the beginning of 2018. The improvement of the minimum salary applies to approximately 24,129 school teachers, 12,159 preschool teachers, 6,570 vocational school teachers, 7350 informal education teachers. Early this month, the Cabinet decided to postpone the vote on the teachers' minimum salary as objections regarding quality and quantity criteria for high schools raised in talks between the government and the social partners.

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

Liechtenstein

Union formulates pay demands

September 17, 2018

In the upcoming wage negotiations trade union LANV will demand pay rises between 1 and 2.5%. Depending on the industry, wages should be increased by up to 2.5%. Furthermore, the union wants the minimum wages to be raised to 3,500 francs for unskilled workers at a 13 months' wage. In recent years employees have had to settle for modest wage increases and many zero pay rounds. The union states that zero pay rounds are out of place this year.

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

Lithuania

Tripartite council doesn't reach agreement on minimum wage

September 18, 2018

The tripartite council that consists of employers, trade unions and government failed to reach an agreement on increase of the minimum wage. Trade unions are demanding that the minimum wage, currently a monthly 420 euro, increases to 450 euro. Meanwhile the government states that minimum wages could only be increased to 430 euro a month. This would be in line with the governments' latest economic development

scenario for 2019. Employers have yet another view on the matter. They propose differentiating in wages per region with salary increases varying in proportion to the average local salary.

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

Luxembourg

Construction bargaining without progress

September 20, 2018

A second meeting of the LCGB and the OGBL trade unions before the National Conciliation Office (ONC) as part of the bargaining for the renewal of the collective agreement in construction took place on 19 September 2018. The unions stated that the employers took a step back by returning to their demand for an extension of the flexibility in the building sector and the claim of an increase in the maximum weekly working time.

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

First ever agreement at Luxembourg University

September 5, 2018

Trade union OGBL and the University of Luxembourg signed their first ever collective agreement. The collective agreement was worked out together by staff, union representatives and the university rectorate and governs the terms of employment for all staff. The agreement applies in the next three years to 1,760 workers: 1,260 who work in academia and research and 500 who work in administration, finance and technical services. Before there was only an agreement on working conditions that was concluded in 2015.

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

Malta

Care bargaining deadlocked

September 10, 2018

With talks about a new collective agreement remaining deadlocked trade union UHM resorted to industrial action. The union demands a pay increase for a part of the more specialised staff and called out their care workers, social workers and occupational therapists not to communicate with clients, not to compile reports, and not to attend meetings to put some force into the demands. Some 500 people with mental or physical health impairments are said to be affected by these actions.

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

Netherlands

Court orders supplementary pay for temporary workers

September 27, 2018

A judge has ruled that 16 temporary workers at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol are receiving a supplementary payment of between €6,500 and €50,000 each, according to an announcement by Dutch union FNV. The workers were cargo handlers and worked through a company called Flexcargo for DHL or Menzies. They did not receive the normal irregularity allowance. Most of the workers, many of whom are from the UK and Poland, are in the meantime directly employed by DHL.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The FNV statement: [in Dutch ...](#)

Highest pay demand in 30 years

September 17, 2018

Trade union FNV has a tradition of yearly setting one nationwide percentage for the pay rise that they will demand in the hundreds of collective agreements in which they are involved. For 2019, FNV will go for a pay rise of 5%, the highest pay rise they've come forward with in 30 years. According to the union, wages are growing to slow in the context of rapid economic growth and labour shortages and thus a pay rise of 5% is

reasonable. Besides the pay rises, FNV will focus in the upcoming bargaining season on creating more secure jobs. Employers' associations are of the opinion that a central pay demand is a backward concept.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The bargaining demands: [in Dutch ...](#)

Minster tried to stop police dispute in court

September 12, 2018

The Minister of Justice and Security turned to court in an effort to stop planned labour actions by the police. The police unions called on officers to only respond to emergencies, and not perform any of their other duties. According to the Minister, this would jeopardise safety. The police action formed part of numerous police protests for a better collective bargaining agreement. Trade unions ACP, ANPV, NPB and VMHP have been protesting for a better collective bargaining agreement for weeks. Shortly after, the unions, the Ministry and the National Police Chief reached a new collective bargaining agreement. All actions were suspended.

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

Primary school teachers call for nationwide public sector strike

September 6, 2018

In their ongoing wage dispute, a group of organised primary school teachers (PO in Action) called out a nationwide strike and day of action 2 October 2018 together with all other public sector workers that are currently having trouble in their negotiations on new collective agreements. In June 2018, primary school teachers and employers reached an agreement on a new pay deal but *PO in Action* is pressing ahead with its campaign to close the gap between primary and secondary teaching salary scales.

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

Norway

Church workers might strike

September 14, 2018

Negotiations between the different trade unions and the Employers Organization for Church Activities (KA) were broken off in July. The unions have decided to go for a strike, if mediation does not lead to a result. Trade union Parat, together with eleven other trade unions, will take out nearly 100 employees on strike if there is no agreement during the mediation. The union said that all professions in the church (pastors, deacons, catechists, organists, kindergarten workers, pedagogues, office employees, grave diggers etc) are affected by the conflict.

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

How to guarantee decent working conditions

September 7, 2018

The construction of the Munch museum in Oslo has been put forward as a showcase for the so-called 'Oslo model'. The model, implemented early 2017, is a set of rules and contracts aiming to prevent tax evasion and the exploitation of workers. The construction of certain projects like the new Munch Museum already started before the Oslo model was implemented but they have been asked to follow the regulations as far as possible. Changes so far include that more workers on building sites are officially registered and due to the 'two-layer rule' the chaotic subcontractor layer system which existed before belongs to the past.

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

Poland

Better working conditions in the public sector

September 22, 2018

Thousands of protesters took to the streets of Warsaw demanding higher wages, higher minimum wage and better pensions in the public sector. The All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (OPZZ) organised the protest stating that while the economy is booming wages are so low that many people struggle to make ends meet.

The country has seen rapid economic growth but most of the 700000 people employed in the public sector received no pay raises since 2010. Trade union Solidarność called for a 12% pay rise in public sector wages to compensate inflation.

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

Ryanair denies rights to cabin crew union

September 14, 2018

The new Cabin Crew Union (CWR) is part of the trade union federation Solidarność and was initiated to fight for fair pay and working conditions in the aviation sector. Ryanair however immediately broke their promise to respect trade union rights. The same day that the union was launched workers withdrew from the employee representation system demanding that their union, instead of them individually, would negotiate on their behalf. Managers refused to receive CWR registration papers and told workers they would be made redundant if they did not accept self-employment contracts with Ryanair. Under Polish law self-employed workers are ineligible for trade union membership and collective bargaining.

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

Portugal

Massive participation expected as nurses strike

September 18, 2018

Trade unions that organise nurses expected a 'massive turnout' for a joint national strike scheduled for 20 and 21 of September as they demand the government to present a new career revision proposal. They demand pay increases across the board, better career progressions and a pay supplement for specialised nurses. The supplement was agreed in 2017. However, the government sees it as a temporary provision.

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

Union demands 4% pay improvement

September 13, 2018

The General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CGTP), has formulated a demand of 4% salary increases for 2019, with a monthly increase of at least €40, and tax relief so that workers can improve their living standard. The demands were set out by the union federation's executive committee in early September. Moreover, the national minimum wage should increase to €650 per month and a housing and tax policy compatible with household income needs to be adopted, according to the CGTP's priorities for 2019.

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

Workers on strike in retail

September 12, 2018

Trade unions are campaigning for months for higher salaries and less work pressure at supermarkets. The unions said that there are many situations of burnout and exhaustion, many medical victims, absenteeism of up to 30% and in most cases with psychiatric victims. The working time rules are not being adhered to by the companies. Employees ask for more free weekends and fewer last-minute changes to their schedules to combine work and private life. The bargaining started 23 months ago. Workers of the hypermarkets, supermarkets and other retail and distribution branches went on strike to back up the demands.

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

Romania

Increase of minimum wage of 7.9%

September 26, 2018

Following meetings with the trade unions and the employers, the government stated that beginning from 1 January 2019, it will increase the country's gross minimum wage to 440 euro a month (an increase of 150 lei). Although the country has had several increases of the minimum wage over the past 10 years, the

country's gross minimum wage is still the third lowest in the European Union. The minimum gross wage increased on 1 January 2018 from RON 1,450 to RON 1,900 (409 euro). Only Bulgaria (260 euro) and Lithuania (400 euro) have lower minimum monthly salaries.

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

Employers are willing to pay more

September 12, 2018

Companies are willing to pay higher salaries to attract new employees as the unemployment rate reached a new low in the first half of 2018 and available workforce is scarce in many sectors. Over 60% of 682 employers who participated in a survey said they plan to open up to 10 new positions in the second half of 2018, while 21% will open between 10 and 20 positions. The positions with the highest demand are those in sales, as 63% of the companies are looking for sales people, administrative activities (57%) and production (54%). Companies are also considering other benefits, such as optional pension or holiday vouchers. Based on another survey the hiring plans of the employers were called the most optimistic in Europe.

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

Serbia

Unions demand 10% increase minimum wage

September 6, 2018

Trade unions will not accept an increase of the minimum wage of less than 10%. They rejected a proposal of the finance ministry that promised an increase with 8.6%. Following the rejection of the trade unions the nations' tripartite Social and Economic Council, that is made up of unions, employers and government representatives, also withheld its support for the proposal. According to union officials at least 10% is necessary to prevent highly skilled workers massively leaving the country to search for better paid work.

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

Slovakia

Wages of nurses will improve

September 28, 2018

The draft budget for 2019 provides for salary increases as agreed by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health. Salaries of nurses will grow with 16% in 2019. According to this proposal, an additional budget must be available for salaries of medical staff, for reconstruction, medical equipment, screening or reversible deaths. The salaries of medical staff will increase by more than 200 million euro.

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

Workers start trade union at Amazon plant

September 10, 2018

Workers at a logistical return centre of Amazon in Sereď, that employs over a 1000 people, founded a trade union in order to fight for better working conditions and salaries. One of the other pressing problems that workers at the Amazon branch put forward is overtime; working hours often exceed the number stipulated by the labour code. The union wants to launch collective bargaining at the latest by the beginning of 2019.

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

Slovenia

Strike at Intelligence and Safety Agency continues

September 27, 2018

The workers of SOVA, the Intelligence and Safety Agency, started nine months ago with a strike in a fight for a re-assessment of positions and more staff. Observers have noted that inside the management nobody has paid attention to the conflict or dealt with the demands. The government has dismissed the acting director.

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

Labour shortages forces port operator to create more decent jobs

September 20, 2018

The operator of the maritime port stated that it will employ 307 workers that are currently sourced out through subcontractors, plus an additional 350 agency workers. This agency workers will also fall under the collective bargaining agreement. The adjustments in hiring will increase labour costs by about 9 million euros a year. The crane operators union was involved in the process of coming to the hiring policy and states that this result is the best approximation of a normal relationship between an employee and employer.

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

Spain

New legislation for Uber and Cabify

September 27, 2018

The government has prepared legislation that will transfer the powers to grant licenses to private-hire drivers (known in Spain as VTC) from the central to the regional governments, giving the latter the power to restrict the activity of such companies by, in effect, demanding that they apply for a second license, this time from the local authorities. UNAUTO, the business association covering the sector of private-hire drivers strongly oppose the move, whilst the taxi associations accuse firms like Uber of intruding in the sector, of not paying taxes, and of benefiting from the cheaper cost of a license compared to that of a taxi.

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

Hospitality workers in Lanzarote reach agreement

September 24, 2018

Housekeepers and valets at the Hotel Be Live Experience in Lanzarote (Canary Islands) ended their ongoing industrial action on 6 September with a vote in favour of a pre-agreement that establishes a negotiated framework for reducing the intolerable workload on housekeepers, guarantees more hours to valets and establishes more permanent positions. The pre-agreement is to take effect immediately, failing which the strike committee is empowered to resume industrial action.

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

Wage data 2nd quarter of 2018

September 18, 2018

According to a press release of the statistical office INE, the labour cost of companies stood at 2,602.01 euro per worker per month in the second quarter of 2018, with a variation rate of 0.7% as compared with the same period of 2017. The wage cost per worker per month increased by 0.5%, standing at an average of 1,951.81 euro. Other related costs increased by 1.2%, standing at 650.20 euro per worker per month. The document provides details by economic sector and by region. Also outlined is the impact of seasonal effects.

Read the press release: [in English ...](#)

Sweden

H&M under pressure

September 24, 2018

In recent years, one of the world's largest retailers, the Swedish based H&M signed a Global Framework Agreement (GFA) with global trade union IndustriALL. And in November 2013, H&M announced that all H&M's strategic suppliers should have pay structures in place to pay a fair living wage by 2018. However, new research by the Clean Clothes Campaign reveals that many workers making H&M's clothes live below

the poverty line, despite H&M's promise of a living wage, and despite the brand's recent deceptive claims of progress. Interviewed workers in India and Turkey earn about a third and in Cambodia less than one-half of the estimated living wage. In Bulgaria interviewed workers' salary at H&M's 'gold supplier' is not even 10% of what would be required for workers and their families to have decent lives.

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

Report on income mobility

September 21, 2018

In an interesting report with background facts, the statistical offices SCB presents new statistics on intragenerational income mobility. The report has sections on mobility in equivalised disposable income, income distribution, inequality and the risk of poverty. The core of the study details the effect of income mobility on income inequality and includes graphs with data on the upward and downward mobility by gender, age, country of birth and level of education.

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

Switzerland

Thousands take to the streets in support of gender wage equality

September 23, 2018

Some 20.000 people participated in a protest supporting gender wage equality. Although gender equality is part of the country's constitution, women on average still earn 20% less than their male colleagues. Organisers of the protest warned that women are prepared to go on strike if parliamentarians do not fix the pay gap. The protest was organised while parliament was debating an amendment aimed at imposing more oversight over wage distribution at large companies.

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

On-line retail with dumping practices

September 21, 2018

Trade union confederation SGB/USS published a blog that criticises the business model of on-line retailers. Especially foreign retailers that do not respect the ordinary arrangements of the domestic supply and logistic put pressure on the wage and working conditions of the involved workers. The statutory minimum wage that has been suggested by the regulator (PostCom) is too low and creates a situation of legalised dumping.

The blog: [in German ...](#)

Turkey

Escalating dispute with airport workers

September 21, 2018

Hundreds of protesting airport workers have been detained by the police as thousands of airport construction workers in Istanbul were protesting against poor working and living conditions on the building site. At least 38 workers are said to have died lately in preventable work-related accidents and many more have been badly injured. The protest for safe working conditions and an end to alleged arbitrary dismissals and late pay was broken up by police and gendarmes deploying in riot control vehicles whilst firing tear gas. Unions have long complained about harsh and unsafe working conditions at the airport, but under the state of emergency that was imposed in 2016 and recently lifted in July rights to strike or protest were curtailed.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) Solidarity actions: [in English ...](#) Union statement: [in English...](#)

Dismissed workers protest in front of headquarter

September 20, 2018

A delegation of trade unionists and workers, dismissed from Yves Rocher's Flormar factory, visited the ILO in Geneva and the company headquarter in Paris. The delegation demonstrated outside a Yves Rocher store in central Geneva, where they were joined by representatives of global and local unions, NGOs and Turkish

opposition political parties. After the demonstration, a meeting was held at the ILO to highlight the violation of Convention 87 on the right to freedom of association. The next day, the delegation travelled to the company office in Paris, where they were joined for a demonstration. A petition got massive support.

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

United Kingdom

Scottish police receives immediate 6.5% pay increase

September 26, 2018

On the eve of the Scottish Police Authority's monthly board meeting in Stirling, the SPA announced an agreement that brings all officers below the rank of Assistant Chief Constable an immediate and substantial increase in their salary. The SPA said the deal will represent an additional £125m in officer wages over the period. A mid-point constable will receive a salary increase of £2,300 and the equivalent of an additional £6,000 in pay over the next 31 months. The increase will be backdated to 1 September and applies until 31 March 2021. Next to the immediate pay award, the agreement addresses issues of inequality and anomalies in relation to pay progression.

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

Piccadilly tube workers on strike

September 26, 2018

Tube workers on the London Piccadilly line will go on strike. After talks between management and the Rail, Maritime and Transport trade union broke down the union announced a 48-hour walkout, followed by a 5-hour strike later on. Main points of conflict are a perceived lack of dignity and respect towards the tube workers. For example, workers have been threatened with sacking for taking time off following issues such as suicides on the railway. They also worry about safety of the tube service. The impact of the strike will be well felt in London, as the Piccadilly line daily transports an average of 500.000 passengers.

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

Cleaners win battle over fair pay

September 25, 2018

Cleaners at Basildon Hospital have won a two-year battle to be granted full NHS terms and conditions. This means that they will also get a 3% pay rise. After the cleaners were transferred back into NHS employment two years ago they remained to work under the same conditions as when they were still working for the private contractor. The cleaners were paid minimum wage while some of their colleagues earned more for the same job, only because they were employed directly by NHS from the beginning. The new agreement not only gives the 300 cleaners the same wages as the cleaners that are directly employed by NHS, other aspects of the collective agreement such as holidays and sick pay will now also apply to them.

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

Again, record underpayment identified

September 22, 2018

A governmental report from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy provides an overview of minimum wage enforcement activity by HM Revenue and Customs during 2017/18, following a similar report in 2017 covering activity during 2016/17. In 2017/18, HMRC identified a record £15.6 million of minimum wage arrears for more than 200,000 workers (double the number workers identified in 2016/17). It is the highest number since the National Minimum Wage came into force in 1999. The report also sets a new record for penalties, with £14 million in fines issued by the government to employers. More than 600 employers who were found to underpay their workers the minimum wage were named in 2017-18. This is the largest number in any single year since the start of the HMRC's programme in 2014.

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

New delivery pay structure at Uber disputed

September 22, 2018

Uber workers demand a minimum of £5 per delivery. Because the minimum per-delivery rate has been reduced from £4.26 to £3.50 workers resorted to wildcat strike actions. While chanting 'No money and no food' motorcyclists blocked the roads outside the Uber headquarter in London for two days. The company said to its couriers that the new fare structure would lead to higher rates 'at the busiest times and in the busiest places'. However, it would lead to lower pay outside of typical meal times or in quieter areas.

Read on: [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 or the Head of communications at the ETUI, Steve Coulter scoulter@etui.org. For previous full issues of the *Collective bargaining newsletter* please visit www.etui.org/E-Newsletters/Collective-bargaining-newsletter or consult the archive with all articles in our database at www.cbnarchive.eu.

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