

collective bargaining

Issue 10/2021 | October

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.

 DE BURCHT | 

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European sources

European initiative for protection of workers against asbestos

October 19, 2021

The European Commission adopted its work programme 2022 entitled 'Making Europe stronger together', which contains 42 new initiatives. The main item in the employment field is monitoring implementation of the action plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights. It announces a specific aim: a legislative initiative seeking to enhance the protection of workers from the risks associated with exposure to asbestos at work, which will take account of the outcomes of consultations with social partners.

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

Report on COVID-19 lockdowns and change in the labour market

October 19, 2021

Eurofound published a report which takes stock of the impact of the public health crisis on the labour market and on the employment structure five quarters after the emergence of the virus. The report describes the employment and working time developments by sector and occupation through the first year of the crisis. It explores which categories of workers were most affected – primarily temporary workers, the young and low-paid women. It also assesses the extent to which remote working served as a buffer during the crisis, preserving jobs that might otherwise have been lost.

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

Social partners discuss circular economy

October 7, 2021

The circular economy is a key part of the European Green deal. It can have a disruptive impact on workers in particular sectors of the economy. To explore this the European cross-sectoral social partners studied these consequences as part of their work programme. The results were presented in a report and a webinar. These showed the positive impact on employment in waste management. The recommendations of the project address employers and public authorities.

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

Austria

Collective agreement for cleaning staff

October 28, 2021

For workers in the cleaning sector a new collective agreement has been concluded. Wages of those employed in monument, facade and building cleaning will be on average 3.5% higher from 2022. For employees in hospital cleaning, the increase in the collective agreement is 3.8 %. Here, the full-time wage will then be € 1,704.29 gross per month, which corresponds to the level in the commercial sector.

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

Government introduces Covid health pass for workers

October 20, 2021

From 1 November 2021, anyone who comes into contact with clients or colleagues at their workplace will have to prove that they comply with the so-called 3G rule, meaning they must either have been vaccinated, recently tested negative for Covid-19 or recovered from the virus. For a transitional period until mid-November, all those who cannot prove their compliance with this rule will have to wear a FFP2 mask at work. Ensuring

compliance with this requirement will be the responsibility of both employers and employees. Random checks will be carried out.

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

Childcare workers on strike

October 14, 2021

Around 5000 childcare workers joined a strike. The protest covered both public and private sectors and was organised by the three trade unions younion, vida and GPA, with the support of the ÖGB trade union confederation. The unions are discontent by the ministry's refusal to invite them onto the advisory board that debates key issues affecting the sector. The protest had one immediate result in that the unions were invited to the next meeting. More broadly the unions use the strike to set out their key demands for greater recognition and appreciation of workers in early education along with more job security and training, increased public spending and improvement of working conditions.

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

Belgium

Strike in supermarket ends after preliminary agreement

October 19, 2021

Following six days of closure due to strike actions Lidl has reopened all its shops. A preliminary agreement has been reached between trade unions and management at the supermarket chain, which stated that measures will be taken to reduce high work pressure in the short and long terms. Alongside expanding the flexible staff that help out with extra tasks and makes up for absences, Lidl will also be rolling out a specific action plan for extra support in the branches with a higher average sickness rate.

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

Flemish Parliament lowers its own wages

October 6, 2021

The Flemish Parliament is introducing a 5% cent pay cut on its own wages. At the end of December 2019, a resolution to this effect was already unanimously approved in Parliament, but it had still not been implemented two years later. In order to get all the paperwork in order, it was decided to implement the reduction from 1 January 2022. It will also apply to mayors and city councillors: they accumulate two sources of income, which are capped so that they can never earn more than 150% of their parliamentary salary.

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

Bulgaria

New extension of 60/40 short-time work scheme

October 18, 2021

The Government announced that employers may apply for financial support for their employees during the period of August to December 2021. This measure, known as the 60/40 program, provides support for businesses to maintain the employment of staff in industries that have been significantly impacted by Covid-19.

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

Croatia

Unemployment decreases

October 27, 2021

According to the latest monthly report for September, the unemployment rate was 19% lower than last month. In year-on-year comparisons, the number of unemployed people in the age group of 20 to 24 decreased the most, by almost 30%, which brought its share of the total number of unemployed people in the country below 10%. Another indicator for the improvement of the domestic labour market situation compared to last year is the fact that as many as 44% more vacancies were registered in September.

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

2000 drivers on strike

October 16, 2021

About 2,000 Uber drivers went on strike due to the delay in payment from Uber. This problem became more and more common. Drivers have been accustomed to weekly payments for years and have, therefore, adjusted their life and work to this pattern. Uber announced that they can understand their position and respect the demands, but that the problem with the payments was caused by local banks.

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

Cyprus

School staff on strike

October 7, 2021

The English School staff went on an indefinite strike but also tabled a vote of no confidence against the board, the headmaster and management team. These strong measures were taken after days of turmoil during which the school staff union (ESSA) had staged first an hour-long and later a one-day work stoppage. The staff protest against a number of issues regarding contracts and changes to timetables but primarily the intended suspension of their union chair after she allegedly used the school system to send unauthorized correspondence to parents.

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

Czechia

Decrease of working hours

October 28, 2021

In the last quarter of 2020, weekly working hours decreased by 2.8 hours, marking the largest decrease in the EU in a year-on-year comparison with the same period of 2019. This data was published in a joint Eurofound and European Commission report, which describes the employment and working time developments by EU country, sector and occupation in the first year of the COVID-19 crisis.

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

Trade union worried about chip crisis in automobile sector

October 21, 2021

The ongoing crisis in the automobile sector, caused by a shortage of chips, will hit small suppliers which have no international backing according to the chairman of one of largest trade unions, KOVO. The

government may consider using Covid-19 subsidies to prop up these businesses in order to avoid shortages of other materials in the future. However, the union expects that smaller suppliers will be hit the hardest, especially those producing plastics, textile materials, rubber and various small parts.

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Denmark

Flexible work patterns are a success

October 14, 2021

Many employers have had their employees working from home in full or in part during the Covid-19 pandemic, and in many cases working from home has turned out to be quite a success. It has shown that it is possible to work together from a distance, and that most meetings may be held online. There are various models to be considered when implementing a more flexible work pattern. It may be voluntary based on the employee's own wish, a mandatory instruction from the employer, a flexible scheme with work performed partly from the office and partly from the home office with no fixed days in or out of the office.

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

Plan for ban on asking age of job applicants

October 6, 2021

A new agreement has been announced between the Government, unions and local authorities, aiming to ease the lack of labour currently prevalent in the country. The agreement aims to prevent older people from being overlooked for jobs due to their age. Under the proposed new rules employers would be prevented from asking potential hires how old they are. Additionally, the deal includes funding for courses for new graduates, designed to help them enter the jobs market soon after completing their studies.

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Estonia

Amendment to collective agreements act not passed

October 19, 2021

Parliament has voted not to readopt, in unchanged form, amendments to a bill which governs the relationship between employers and employees. As a result, the bill amending the Collective Agreements Act, and other acts was not passed and will be further processed in accordance with the law, overseen by the social affairs committee. The bill sought to bring the regulation of extending the term of a collective agreement into line with the constitutionally protected freedom of enterprise, while ensuring the capacity for social partnership and collective inclusion.

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

Social partners agree on rise of minimum wage

October 6, 2021

The Estonian Trade Union Confederation (EAKL) and the Estonian Employers' Confederation signed an agreement that will increase the minimum wage to €654 in 2022 - an increase of €70. They furthermore agree that the hourly wage will rise to €3.86. According to the central bank, this means that in 2022, the minimum wage will rise by 12% and will stand at 39.5% of the average wage. Employers and unions are also proposing that increases in the minimum wage should not be arbitrarily linked to other benefit changes, such as kindergarten fees or salaries of municipality leaders.

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Finland

New collective agreement for forestry company

October 13, 2021

An agreement was reached between forestry company Stora Enso and the Paperworkers' Union. Under the deal, the employees will receive a 1.9% pay increase in the first two years and 0.9% in the third year. The collective agreement is valid for two years and four months, so wages will increase by two percent annually.

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

Union calls for pay increases for all

October 13, 2021

The public services union JHL has made clear that in the upcoming pay round it will be seeking pay increases for all the workers it represents across public and private sectors. It argues that moderate pay rises in the public services in the past have been part of a strategy to boost economic growth but now these workers need to benefit from that growth. JHL is also concerned to take further steps to close the gender pay gap and argues strongly that decent wage increases are needed to address staffing shortages.

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

France

Extension of caregiver leave approved

October 25, 2021

The criteria for entitlement to caregiver leave and compensation are to be broadened, following amendments to the Social Security Financing Bill (PLFSS). The changes apply to a scheme that was introduced in 2017 but has only offered compensation since 2020. The leave allowance has a legal duration of 3 months and is open to all employees close to a disabled person or an individual dealing with a serious loss of independence. These measures will come into force by 1 January 2023 at the latest if the PLFSS is adopted by both chambers of the French parliament.

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Electricity and gas workers in action

October 21, 2021

Unions FNME-CGT, FCE-CFDT, CFE-CGC Energies and FO Energie took action against social regression and attacks on pension and unemployment insurance schemes, as well as to demand higher wages. The largest electricity and gas company, EDF, has continuously highlighted employees' 'remarkable engagement' in the service to clients and in the fight against climate change. In a joint message, the unions demanded that EDF put their words into action and recognize the employees' commitment to the company by recognizing 'employees with hard cash.'

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

Social partners reach vocational training agreement

October 20, 2021

Social partners reached a cross-industry framework agreement (ANI) that will reform vocational training. This text opens the way to a series of seven themed negotiations, which the social partners plan to complete

by the end of June 2022. One of them will relate to the 'vocational transition' scheme for financing the redeployment of employees from one sector to another.

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

Germany

Agreement in wood and plastics industry

October 20, 2021

In a new collective agreement for the wood and plastics processing industry in Lower Saxony/Bremen and Baden-Württemberg, the demographic fund will be doubled and wages will rise by 4.9% in two stages. There will also be a one-off corona payment of €385. The agreement followed a warning strike in which 12,000 workers participated.

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

Agreement in construction sector

October 15, 2021

After five rounds of negotiations and two arbitration rounds, Union IG BAU and the employers have come to an agreement for the almost 900,000 construction workers. The construction workers in the west receive a corona bonus of €500 for the months July to October 2021. As of November 1, 2021, incomes in the west will be increased by 2 percent and in the east by 3 percent. On April 1, 2022, there will be a further increase of 2.2% (east: 2.8%) and on April 1, 2023, a further 2% (east: 2.7%). There is also a one-off payment of €400 for the west on May 1, 2022, and another €450 a year later.

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

Agreement in wholesale and foreign trade sector

October 5, 2021

A first collective agreement is achieved in wholesale and foreign trade in Bavaria. Further agreements have also been made in retail. After months of negotiations and strikes, there is movement in the collective bargaining round for wholesale. In Bavaria, the Federal Association of Wholesale, Foreign Trade, Services (BGA) and the Verdi union agreed on a two-stage increase in wages and salaries by a total of 4.7%. For the wholesale and foreign trade employees in Bavaria, wages and salaries will rise by 3% retrospectively from October 1. As of April 1, 2022, there is a further increase of 1.7%. The training allowance will be increased by €30 in the current year and by a further €20 in 2022. The collective agreement has a duration of 24 months.

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

Greece

Hospital staff stage 24-hours strike

October 21, 2021

About 500 protesters rallied in Athens to protest against staff shortages and compulsory coronavirus vaccinations. Unions representing doctors, nurses, and other medical staff are protesting against government plans, which they say will lead to long working hours while undermining workers' rights. Medical workers are also seeking to be included in the list of professions receiving extra hazard pay for 'heavy and unhealthy' work.

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

Teachers strike over new education law

October 11, 2021

Greek primary and high school teachers went on a strike to protest against a new education law that makes the evaluation of teachers and schools in the country compulsory. Some 5,000 teachers marched to the parliament in Athens denouncing the law they believe will put schools in categories and force the closing down of those with poor evaluations. They also criticized the recent law that restricts their right to walk off the job, as well as the decision of the Government to increase the student-teacher ratio in order to compensate for a teacher shortage. 95% of the Greek teachers have voiced their rejection of the new law, according to the teachers' unions.

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

Hungary

Raise of nurses' salary announced

October 8, 2021

The Government will raise nurses' salaries by 21% from January 2022, and plans to increase the monthly minimum wage. The Government said talks on the minimum wage increase were still underway. The Government will cut taxes for businesses if they are ready to raise the minimum wage.

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

Iceland

Second highest wages

October 29, 2021

A comparison of wages by the OECD shows that in Iceland, wages are the second highest, after the US. The report states that an international comparison of the average real wages (i. e. expressed in terms of purchasing power) of all fully employed people in the labour market is a good indicator of a country's welfare. Last year, the average annual wages in Iceland amounted to the equivalent of €58,400.

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

Wages in culture sector decrease by 40%

October 5, 2021

According to the Confederation of University Graduates, total wage payments in the cultural industries have decreased by 40% between 2008 and 2020, and the number of employees in the same sector has shrunk by 25%. This development indicates a persistent downfall in different cultural fields since 2017. The wage level in cultural industries is lower compared to other industries.

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

Ireland

Progress on talks over collective bargaining rights

October 26, 2021

The Congress of Trade Unions says some progress has been made in talks with the Government on collective bargaining rights. The General Secretary said some progress has been made during discussions with a high-level group established to consider the issue earlier this year. Unions have been encouraged by European

Union plans to introduce a directive on the issue. If that becomes legislation across the EU, it will be an immense help in the campaign to amend the constitution to guarantee the rights of trade unions to engage in collective bargaining.

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4-day working week pilot

October 6, 2021

Starting in February 2022, 17 employers will introduce a four-day working week on a trial basis for a period of six months. The pilot programme was devised by the lobby group Four Day Week Ireland. The group announced that 17 companies had already decided to take part in the pilot. The Government has supported the concept by providing €150,000 to fund a research study on the social, economic and ecological impact of a reduced working week.

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

Italy

Taxi drivers on strike

October 22, 2021

Taxi services were brought to a virtual standstill across Italy by a one-day strike by drivers. Several unions representing taxi drivers support their members for a strike. The taxi drivers also staged a demonstration in Rome. They are calling for regulation of ride-hailing apps and better and safe working conditions. Some 80% of all taxi drivers joined the strike, according to the unions.

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

Social partners launch training platform

October 15, 2021

Three trade unions – Fiom-Cgil, Fim-Cisl and Uilm – and the the employer organisations Federmeccanica and Assital have joined forces to launch a digital platform called MetApprendo, with a view to aiding the implementation of the individual right to training provided for in the collective agreement for the engineering and metals sector. The digital platform will provide companies in the sector with a series of services to gauge training needs, build customised plans and provide online training.

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

Latvia

High demand for workers in delivery services

October 27, 2021

Despite temporary unemployment in many sectors, there are areas that lack workers, especially in delivery services. Due to remote working and learning, there is high demand for information technology specialists. The Employment Agency's home page contains 5,675 job offers. On the other hand, skilled employees are in demand in all sectors, including those that have been severely affected by the pandemic.

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

Planned increase of healthcare workers' and teachers' wages

October 12, 2021

The Government passed the legislative draft for the State Budget 2022. A considerable amount of funding is planned to be allocated to increase wages of healthcare workers, teachers and workers of the interior affairs sector. One of the Government's outlined priorities in taxes is the reduction of the labour force tax for low-wage recipients.

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

Liechtenstein

Union plea for measures to support parenthood

October 4, 2021

Union LANV aims to enable parents to take care of their children themselves in the first year of life through targeted measures. According to a position paper of the union, the framework conditions for the compatibility of family and work are still inadequate to a considerable extent. The union asks for the implementation of an EU directive that aims to counter the underrepresentation of women in professional life and to support their career development through improved conditions for the reconciliation of work and private life.

Read on: [in German...](#) Read on the position paper: [in German...](#)

Lithuania

Increasing shortage of staff

October 28, 2021

As pandemic restrictions eased amid the accessibility of Covid-19 vaccines and businesses started bouncing back, many employers faced – and are still facing – severe workforce shortages. Hiring staff has perhaps never been harder for employers as it is now. Raising wages isn't enough to win talents and even hire a sweeper. The pandemic has changed everything. Aware of possible new lockdown restrictions, many bar people and servers just left the sector. Workers who may have lost their jobs during the peak of the pandemic were now highly desired, but they are just gone.

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

Luxembourg

New collective agreement for tobacco company

October 27, 2021

The tobacco company Heintz van Landewyck has signed a new collective labour agreement with the OGBL and LCGB unions. The agreement will last three years, covering around 560 employees. Employees will receive a retroactive pay increase of 1.5%, affecting their wages from next year. A further salary increase will follow if there is no indexation in October 2022. The company will also pay out a €250 bonus to all staff to celebrate its 175th anniversary next June.

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

Health pass will become mandatory

October 12, 2021

In his State of the Nation speech the Prime Minister confirmed that employers would be allowed to insist that their employees showed the health pass (CovidCheck certificate) they already have to use in order to gain access to public places such as restaurants. This additional constraint should encourage people to get

vaccinated. However, this proposal was rejected by a trade-union front made up of three national confederations. This new measure is due to enter into force on 1 November.

Read on the State of the Union: [in French...](#) Read on the letter of the unions: [in French...](#)

Malta

Union draws attention to missing payments for social welfare workers

October 8, 2021

Some 400 people who were employed at the Foundation for Social Welfare Services are missing close to €10 million in unpaid national insurance contributions, with many fearing for their pensions, union UHM- Voice of the Workers said. In a newsletter the union claimed that the former FSWS employees, who were on the agency's payroll between 2000 and 2007, found that their employer had failed to make national insurance contributions on their behalf, despite the amount still appearing to be deducted from their salaries.

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

Netherlands

University hospital staff strike

October 26, 2021

Hundreds of operations have been cancelled at the eight academic hospitals as medical staff again goes on strike in support of more pay and better working conditions. The health workers first went on strike on September 28. According to union FNV it is the largest strike in academic hospitals ever.

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

Bill adopted to introduce nine weeks of paid parental leave

October 15, 2021

The Senate approved the paid parental leave bill, which will come into force on 2 August 2022. The bill adheres to the provisions of the EU directive on the work-life balance of parents and carers and introduces a two-month (nine weeks) period of paid parental leave, which is non-transferable from one parent to the other. At present, parents can take 26 weeks of parental leave in the first eight years of their child's life. However only a third of parents actually make use of this allowance, as it is unpaid unless a company or collective agreement dictates otherwise. The government has therefore decided to cover the first nine weeks of the 26 weeks of parental leave.

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

Collective agreement for civil servants

October 14, 2021

On 13 October an agreement was reached for the civil servants working for the central government. The main points of the collective agreement are a 2% wage increase as of 1 July 2021, a one-off payment of €300 in December 2021, and a one-off and a structural allowance for working from home.

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

Norway

Pay rise for childcare staff

October 11, 2021

The Fagforbundet and Delta trade unions have negotiated pay increases for workers in early education in the private sector. The pay rise is around 4% varying according to skill level with the minimum annual salary for assistants. The trade unions and the PBL employers' organisation also agreed to continue negotiations over pensions.

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

Poland

Miners protest against coal mine closure

October 22, 2021

Thousands of coal miners have demonstrated in Luxembourg against the closure of the Turow coal mine. Around 2,000 protesters staged a rally after the European Union's Court of Justice decided to shut down the brown coal mine in Turow. The demonstrators also left a protest letter at the court.

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

Public sector employees demand higher wage increase

October 9, 2021

Public sector employees demonstrated against low wages in front of the Family and Labour Ministry and in several other places around Warsaw. Taking part in the protest, organised by the OPZZ trade union association, were administration workers from the ZUS social insurer, the justice sector, including courts, the road transport inspectorate and the army. An OPZZ official said that 'the whole public sector is fighting for wages as all people have the right to fair pay.' The government is planning to raise the public sector's wages by 4.4%, but the OPZZ demands a 12% increase.

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

Portugal

5 days paid leave for employees who are also caregivers

October 26, 2021

Employees who are also caregivers will benefit from 5 days of paid leave provided by the State, the right to telework, as well as guarantees against dismissal, inequality or discrimination. The system is further complemented by the availability of 15 days of unpaid leave of absence.

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

Unions reject pay offer for public service workers

October 1, 2021

Unions reject the Government's initial offer of a pay increase of 0.9% for public service workers for 2022. The trade unions are calling for a minimum €90 a month increase from 1 January 2022 with a minimum wage set at €850. The SINTAP trade union has claimed an increase of 2.5%. The unions have a range of other demands relating to meal allowances, the pay structure and career development, arduous work, precarious employment, changes to the performance management system and working time.

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

Romania

Pay rise of 8% expected

October 12, 2021

Private companies estimate an average increase of 8.1% in basic salaries in 2022, after an average increase of 8.9% this year, according to the PayWell 2021 study conducted by PwC Romania. The salary increase reported for this year is almost twice as high as that expected by respondents, of 4.68%, in the edition of the PayWell study conducted in 2020, in a period of economic uncertainty. The highest average salary increase in 2021, 13.7%, was registered by industry, followed by the pharmaceutical sector (10.5%), retail (8.2%) and the banking sector (8.0%).

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

Labour Inspectorate raises awareness of seasonal workers' rights

October 7, 2021

The Labour Inspectorate marked the EU Week for Seasonal Workers with a national campaign to raise awareness on employers' obligations as well as on workers' rights. During the inspections, employers were encouraged to fill in daily labourer record books and for copies of these to be sent to the Territorial Labour Inspectorate, where the company is registered. Labour inspectors had an active role in observing the way the legal provisions related to the use of day labourers were completed.

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

Serbia

Union demands inspection at Chinese company

October 27, 2021

The Sloga Trade Union Association has demanded that labour inspectors carry out an inspection at the Chinese tire production company, Linglong, in Zrenjanin, in order to verify the conditions under which Chinese workers, who were brought to Serbia to construct the Linglong factory, work and live. According to the union the Chinese workers work under 'conditions unworthy of human beings and [which] go against the European values which we are trying to promote in this country.'

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

Majority of Serbians denied right to dignified work

October 8, 2021

The majority of Serbian citizens are denied the right to dignified labour in terms of employment options, an adequate wage, protection of the unemployed, and secure employment, the Belgrade Center for Democracy Foundation said on the World Day for Decent Work. In 2020, some 620,100 people were jobless or underemployed, whereas the wages received by most workers did not enable a dignified life for them or their families.

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

Slovakia

Unions ask for better working conditions at DELL

October 4, 2021

Trade unions at DELL Slovakia are asking for better working conditions for their employees. They submitted a proposal for a collective agreement with 30 measures to the company's management. The demands include higher severance pay for employees, an extraordinary bonus for disabled people after the termination of employment, more flexible working hours for parents with children, an allowance for educating employed parents' children, or paid sabbatical leave after ten years of service for up to 6 months with 35% of the monthly salary.

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

Proposal for days off for employees who get a vaccination

October 1, 2021

A recent initiative would allow employers to offer employees days off for and following vaccination and a financial incentive to get vaccinated but raises potential data protection and discrimination issues. A recent proposed amendment to the Labour Code aims to increase motivation to be vaccinated against Covid-19. To achieve this goal, the new legislation should allow employers to incentivise employees to be vaccinated and allow them to provide employees with leave on the day of vaccination, one to five days additional post-vaccination leave, and a financial contribution up to €275.

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

Slovenia

High levels of workplace stress

October 16, 2021

According to the career and employment portal MojeDelo.com the country is among the EU countries with the highest levels of stress at work. This is also one of the main reasons for missing work and for short-time working, accounting for 50-60% of all lost working days. A survey found that one in four workers experienced anxiety to the point where this began to interfere with their work at least once in the previous month. Some 10% of the respondents experienced symptoms of depression or anxiety and 25% said they faced burnout in the past year.

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

Employers experience labour shortages

October 2, 2021

Amid a prospering situation in the labour market and favourable unemployment trends, employers have been recording large structural imbalances between the registered jobless and companies' needs since the 2008 financial crisis. According to the Employment Service, there have been fewer than 70,000 registered as jobless in August. However, the latest survey among employers found that some 37% were faced with a shortage of appropriate candidates to fill their job vacancies.

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Spain

Unions call for proper negotiations

October 5, 2021

Unions CCOO and UGT are discontent that the Government simply wanted union endorsement for the 2022 budget without taking account of key trade union demands relating to the recovery of purchasing power, the 35-hour working week and elimination of the replacement rate that is hampering efforts to reduce temporary employment. The unions also reject the government pay offer of 2% for 2022 which they say risks

a further loss of purchasing power for workers over the coming year, after a 10% decline over the past 10 years, and fails to take account of the sacrifices and efforts made during the pandemic.

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Train drivers on strike

October 4, 2021

Renfe train drivers went on strike again after a call by the Semaf union. The drivers were striking to protest and demand that the integrity of the services provided by Renfe is maintained. The strike also calls for the reinstatement of jobs and routes that have been eliminated.

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Sweden

Employers should not let language be a barrier

October 12, 2021

Arbetsförmedlingen, the public employment service, has urged employers to consider hiring people with limited Swedish skills to fill vacancies, as new statistics show a labour shortage amid falling unemployment. Arbetsförmedlingen warned that around a third of its registered job seekers had never completed their upper secondary education. The report added that many job seekers don't have the level of Swedish that's often required, and urged employers to step up their work to retain and attract the workers they need. 'It may be good to review your list of requirements as an employer. You might want to think about whether it's possible to hire someone with limited experience or a slightly lower level of Swedish,' according to Arbetsförmedlingen.

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Switzerland

Health workers demonstrate for better pay

October 30, 2021

The vpod/ssp trade union was calling for a national demonstration of health workers in Bern. The aim of the protest is to highlight the efforts that health workers have made in responding to the Covid-19 crisis. Key demands include a Covid bonus but also action to deal with the long-standing problems of pay and understaffing in the sector. The union is also calling for measures to improve training, work-life balance and retirement provision and argues that pay increases should reflect the arduousness of many health workers' jobs.

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New collective agreement for supermarket chain

October 22, 2021

Coop Switzerland has announced that it is to raise lower incomes and minimum wages by a total of 0.8% in 2022. In addition, Coop Switzerland and the unions have agreed on a new collective agreement and extended it by four years. The new contract, which will come into effect at the beginning of 2022, will cover around 37,000 employees from all over the country. The new agreement will see the retailer significantly expanding the benefits it offers to employees.

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Turkey

Journalists' union reaches collective agreement

October 12, 2021

The Journalists' Union TGS has announced that it has reached an agreement with Agence France-Press (AFP), whose journalists in Turkey previously decided to go on a strike. AFP has agreed with a 16% salary increase, a meal fee per month, one salary bonus every year and private health insurance, according to the union.

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Government aims to reduce youth unemployment

October 5, 2021

According to the National Youth Employment Strategy, the Government aims to bring down the youth unemployment rate from 25 in 2020 to 17.8% by 2023. This includes plans to establish job centers nationwide for short-term training programs. The strategy document was prepared with contributions from public institutions, faculties and non-governmental organizations.

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United Kingdom

Minimum wage increases by 6.6%

October 27, 2021

The National Living Wage will rise to £9.50 (€11.23) from 1 April 2022. This represents an increase of 6.6%. The Low Pay Commission's recommendations set the minimum wage back on track to reach the Government's target of two-thirds of median earnings by 2024. The recommendations were unanimously agreed by Commissioners and accepted in full by the Government.

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Bus drivers on strike

October 14, 2021

Services on the bus network, already in 'crisis' because of a shortage of thousands of drivers, are set to get worse as unions plan a series of strikes. The RMT is starting with a walk-out of bus workers at Stagecoach Southwest, and Unite is planning a strike for the first week of November in many of Stagecoach's other franchises. The action includes staff at Stagecoach's north-east services, which voted overwhelmingly to back strike action. Other bus companies, including Arriva North West, also face possible strike action. Unions say drivers' pay, which in many areas is less than £10 (€11.83) an hour, must improve to attract more recruits and stop existing staff leaving.

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