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Report by EU social partners on skills, innovation and training
25 November 2021

The European social partners have published a report with recommendations on skills, innovation, provision of and access to training. One key message is that training provision for employees is mainly the responsibility of the social partners. When organising employee training, the national social partners need to take into account the realities of the labour markets and the needs of workers, including changes of tasks and jobs, innovation, mobility and transitions into and between jobs. Fostering a lifelong learning culture in workplaces is essential to help workers to develop in their career and to improve their employment opportunities.

Read on: in English... Read the report: in English...

Joint Statement on Just Transition
16 November 2021

The social partners in the electricity sector – the employers’ organisation Eurelectric and the European trade union federations EPSU and IndustriAll Europe – have adopted a joint position on the issue of a Just Transition, supplementing the statement already adopted in 2017. The signatories are committed to ‘ensuring a comprehensive social dialogue at the European, national, regional, sectoral and company level, including European Works Councils as an integral part of transition strategies’.

Read on: in English... Read the joint statement: in English...

EP Committee votes to strengthen collective bargaining
11 November 2021

The Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament has voted on a draft EU law that aims to ensure decent minimum wage protection. The committee supports the initiative but seek greater ambition for collective bargaining and more protection for trade union activities. The draft directive explicitly aims to strengthen and extend the coverage of collective bargaining. Whereas the Commission proposes that Member States should step up their efforts to promote collective bargaining if collective bargaining agreements cover less than 70% of the workforce, Parliament wants all Member States below a threshold of 80% to take action.

Read on: in English... Read on: in English (2)...

Higher minimum wage to reduce gender pay gap
9 November 2021

An analysis by the ETUC shows that higher minimum wages across Europe could have a massive impact on the gender pay gap. The ETUC has been calling for a double decency threshold – 50% of the average wage and 60% of the median wage – to be used in the directive on adequate minimum wages. The ETUC underlines that many women are trapped in underpaid and undervalued jobs and make up 76% of the 49 million care workers in the EU. The pay transparency directive could also have a major impact along with the minimum wage directive that includes provisions to strengthen collective bargaining.

Read on: in English...

Austria

Pay rise of 3.55% for the metal industry
19 November 2021

The social partners have reached a collective agreement in the metal industry which will result in a 3.55% salary increase over one year. Apprenticeship allowances will rise from 4.27% to 6.74% depending on the year of apprenticeship. The new minimum salary for the sector is set at €2,089.87 per month. As in previous
years, the six metalworking federations, which have been negotiating separately for 10 years at the request of the employers, have adopted an identical agreement that applies to the sector’s 190,000 employees.

Read on: in German...

**Collective agreement in the food and beverage industry**
**15 November 2021**

After intensive negotiations, a new collective agreement for the food and beverage industry has been concluded. The collective agreement stipulates that the minimum basic salaries as well as the actual monthly salaries and all collectively agreed supplements and allowances will be increased by 2.7% as of 1 November 2021. The apprenticeship allowance will increase by 3%.

Read on: in German...

**Collective agreement in the railway sector**
**1 November 2021**

The social partners in the railway sector have reached a new collective agreement with a wage increase of 3.7% for the 50,000 employees in the rail-transportation industry. This was agreed during the fifth round of negotiations between the Railways Association in the Austrian Chamber of the Economy (WKO) and the Railways Division of the transport and service union vida. The collective agreement applies from 1 November 2021 to 30 November 2022.

Read on: in German...

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**Belgium**

**Unions call for demonstration for higher living standards**
**28 November 2021**

The trade union confederations FGTB/ABVV and CSC/ACV jointly organised a national demonstration that took place on 6 December. In so doing, they sought to raise awareness of the problems involved in maintaining living standards as inflation increases, primarily driven by soaring energy prices. The confederations are seeking to ensure that there is adequate space for proper negotiations in which they are challenging the provisions of the 1996 law that restrict the scope for pay increases. The confederations are also committed to defending trade union rights in the face of the recent court decision that saw suspended prison sentences imposed on a number of activists who had taken part in a general strike.

Read on: in French...

**New agreement on employment and working conditions for white-collar workers**
**24 November 2021**

The social partners of Joint Committee 200 – representing the largest number of employees in the country, more than 480,000 white-collar workers who do not belong to another committee – have come to an agreement on employment and working conditions. The most important provisions of the agreement are that, as of 1 December 2021, both minimum wage scales and actual gross monthly wages will increase by 0.4%. This increase can be granted either through a salary increase or cash bonus of at least that amount and/or the provision of other benefits of equivalent purchasing power.

Read on: in English...

**Collective agreement in the chemical sector**
**10 November 2021**

The active members of the Christian trade union ACVBIÉ/CSCBIÉ have approved the draft agreement in the chemical sector which was reached by the social partners on 25 October. The main points of the agreement are: an increase in the minimum wage of €0.20 per hour or €34.67 per month to be implemented in two phases (1 January 2022 and 1 April 2022); for non-traditional companies, a 0.4% pay increase as of 1 November 2021 with a minimum of €0.10 per hour or €17.33 per month and a 0.4% increase in shift
bonuses; a coronavirus premium of €200 net for 2021 (pro rata to hours worked); and an increase in the union premium to €145 for white-collar workers.

Read on: in Dutch...

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**Bulgaria**

**Wages down 0.3%**

*12 November 2021*

At the end of September 2021, the number of employees under labour contract decreased by 1.0% as compared to the end of June 2021 and reached 2.28 million, according to preliminary data of the National Statistical Institute (NSI). In the third quarter of 2021, the average gross monthly wages and salaries decreased by 0.3% compared to the second quarter of 2021. The average gross monthly wage is currently BGN 1,520 (€777).

Read on: in English...

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**Croatia**

**Covid certificate-related dismissals expected in the education sector**

*3 November 2021*

According to a representative of the teachers’ union Preporod, in early December, the first extraordinary dismissals can be expected in the education system for those employees who have not been vaccinated and are refusing coronavirus testing. The first warnings have been handed out to teachers without Covid certificates. There are also some employees who asked for unpaid leave due to their decision not to be tested or vaccinated, while others decided to use their sick leave.

Read on: in English...

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**Cyprus**

**Meeting of Government and social partners to discuss minimum wage**

*3 November 2021*

The Cyprus Government and the social partners held the first session of the Labour Advisory Body for the adoption of a minimum wage by the end of 2021. During the meeting, a representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) presented the basic elements of a study carried out by the ILO for the adoption of a minimum wage in Cyprus. The adoption of a minimum wage was initially scheduled for 2020, but the Government postponed the project due to the Covid crisis. The Government stated that the current conditions in the labour market favour the adoption of a minimum wage.

Read on: in English...

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**Czechia**

**Government approves minimum wage rise**

*5 November 2021*

The Czech Government has approved a rise in the minimum gross monthly wage by CZK 1,000 (€39) to CZK 16,200 (€631) from January 2022. The minimum wage is paid to around 150,000 of the country’s 4 million
employees, but it is also used as a benchmark to determine higher wages in a number of professions. The average monthly gross wage was CZK 38,275 (€1,490) in the second quarter.

Read on: in English...

Denmark

Union survey on working hours in the eldercare sector
11 November 2021

A survey by the Danish trade union FOA found that 18% of its members in eldercare who work part-time would like to work longer hours. The union says that, if they were to do so, it would effectively mean an additional 2,100 jobs in the sector. FOA figures show a very high level of part-time work in the sector but with variations across municipalities. FOA underlines the importance of action to tackle understaffing with an estimated 42,000 additional staff needed by 2030.

Read on: in Danish...

Estonia

Wage growth nearly 8%
26 November 2021

According to the government agency Statistics Estonia, average monthly gross wages rose by 7.8% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2021. By economic activity, the average monthly gross wages and salaries were highest in information and communication (€2,878), finance and insurance (€2,539) and the energy sector (€2,007). The average gross wages were lowest in accommodation and food service (€976), real estate (€1,133) and other service’ activities (€1,260).

Read on: in English...

Finland

Draft bill allows workers to see how much their colleagues earn
25 November 2021

The Finnish Government has proposed a bill that would allow workers to see how much their colleagues earn. The Equality Minister explained that the proposed policy aims to reduce the country’s gender pay gap. Men in Finland earned, on average, 17.2% more than women in 2020. Some employer groups have criticised the proposal, claiming that it would lead to conflict between workers.

Read on: in English...

Strike action to defend collective agreement
16 November 2021

The public services trade union JHL has organised strike action at the Arkea Oy company, owned by the City of Turku. The union is challenging the company’s plans to switch employers’ organisation affiliation and transfer around 1,000 employees to a different collective agreement with poorer pay and employment conditions. Lower-paid workers could see their pay cut by 15-30%. The city’s group management has given the plan its blessing, while discussions between the trade union JHL and Arkea have not yet yielded any results.

Read on: in English... Read on: in Finish...
France

Amazon grants additional leave days to employees providing care  
26 November 2021

Employees of Amazon France Logistique, a warehousing subsidiary of the e-commerce giant, have approved an agreement covering both quality of life at work and gender equality in the workplace. A vote was required, as the text was signed by only three trade unions out of five (CGT, CAT and CFE-CGC). Valid for the period 2021-2023, the agreement extends the legal caregiver leave for employees concerned and offers additional days of paternity leave. The subsidiary has also committed to a process of reflection on the introduction of daytime shifts.

Read on: in English... Read on: in English...

Parental leave allowance in France should be linked to wages  
5 November 2021

Parents currently receive a set €398.79 per month, but a report, requested by the Employment Minister and the Social Services Minister, suggests it should instead reflect the parent’s salary, with a fixed ceiling. Increasing parental leave pay-outs in proportion to household salary is among a raft of proposed reforms. The duration would be shortened to cover the first year of the baby’s life, rather than up to three years, as it is now, with a maximum of six months for each parent unless it is a one-parent family. The report also advises that childcare provision should be improved for one- to three-year-olds.

Read on: in English...

Undocumented workers go on strike  
1 November 2021

Hundreds of undocumented workers in the Paris region have gone on strike to demand legalization of their employment status. Employed in catering, delivery and waste collection, they have been on the front line during the pandemic. The French union federation CGT, which is coordinating the strike, held a meeting between the management of Paris’s Café Marly and undocumented dishwashers.

Read on: in English...

Germany

Collective agreement for employees of the Länder  
29 November 2021

The German trade union ver.di achieved a result for employees of the Länder after several rounds of negotiations. According to the new agreement, the 1.1 million employees of the federal states (except Hesse) will receive a tax-free payment according to the Covid regulations in the amount of €1,300 at the beginning of 2022. Apprentices, trainees and students are to receive a €650 tax-free payment at the same time. On 1 December 2022, wages will be increased by 2.8%. As of December 2022, apprenticeship pay and trainee/student allowances will therefore increase by €50 or by €70 in the health care system. The term of the collective agreement is 24 months.

Read on: in German...

Collective agreement for 25,000 filmmakers  
25 November 2021

The German trade union ver.di and the employers’ association Producers’ Alliance (Produzentenallianz) have agreed on a two-stage increase in weekly wages of €50 from 1 January 2022 and a further €35 from 1
April 2023. Assistants’ wages, for example, are set to rise by 8%. The first step will result in an average increase of over 4% for all occupations.

Read on: in German... Read on: in German (2)...

**Wage increase for railway workers**
19 November 2021

The German railway and transport union EVG and employers have reached a collective agreement for the employees of railway company AKN Eisenbahn GmbH. Wages will increase in three stages by a total of 3.3%. A one-off payment of €810 will also be made. Training allowances will be raised to the normal market level.

Read on: in German...

**Higher wages for Berlin hotel and restaurant workers**
10 November 2021

The German Food, Beverages and Catering Union NGG has concluded a new collective agreement for around 50,000 employees in the Berlin hotel and restaurant industry. As of 1 January 2022, wages in the two lowest wage groups will rise to €12 and in wage group 4 to €12.50 per hour. Wages in all other groups are set to rise by 4%. As of 1 October 2022, wages in all pay groups will increase by a further 6%.

Read on: in German...

**Greece**

**Hostility towards census workers in Greece leads to resignations**
25 November 2021

The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) is currently conducting the 2021 Census of the Greek population. Citizens’ hostility has led to mass resignations of census workers. In Patras, the capital of the Prefecture of Achaia, and one of Greece’s most populous cities, 500 of the 700 census workers have resigned their posts.

Read on: in English...

**Catering industry on strike**
16 November 2021

Workers in pubs, cafés and restaurants went on strike to protest against the Greek Government’s Covid measures which, in their view, have led to 30-50% income losses and are threatening jobs in the catering industry. Members of the Greek Federation of Restaurants have handed over a petition to the Prime Minister.

Read on: in English...

**Hungary**

**Teachers’ unions join forces**
26 November 2021

Since teachers in Hungary postponed their strike plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic, their working conditions have continued to worsen. The country’s two main trade unions in the education sector, PSZ and PDSZ, will now coordinate their action in order to address concerns over low wages, staff shortages and high workloads. According to the joint demands made, the projection base for teachers’ basic pay should be the current minimum wage, paid retroactively from 1 September; the guaranteed pay for non-teaching staff in
education should also be increased retroactively from that date; and teachers’ working hours dedicated to education and teaching should not exceed 22 hours per week.

Read on: in English...

**Agreement on minimum wage increase**

*3 November 2021*

According to Hungary’s Innovation and Technology Ministry, the Government and private-sector employers have agreed on the main terms of a nearly 20% hike in the minimum wage and pay for skilled workers for the 2022 election year. The Government was also asked to adjust the basic wages of civil servants. Under the agreement, monthly minimum pay will rise to 200,000 forints (€550) from 167,400 forints (€462) as of January, while the minimum wage for skilled workers will increase to 260,000 forints (€718) from 219,000 (€605).

Read on: in English...

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**Iceland**

**Taxable wages increase**

*2 November 2021*

The total sum of taxable wages increased by 0.6% in September 2021 from the previous month and increased by around 11.8% from September 2020. The annual changes vary between economic activities. The data have not been adjusted for inflation. Taxable payments consist of wages as well as other taxable income and benefits such as parental leave payments, unemployment benefits and pension payments.

Read on: in English...

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**Ireland**

**Draft bill on sick leave**

*16 November 2021*

Ireland is one of the few countries that do not have a statutory sick leave scheme, funded by the employer. This situation will probably change, thanks to the forthcoming ‘Sick Leave Bill’. Employees will be granted an annual entitlement to three days of statutory sick leave. This sick leave will be paid for by the employer, and its length will gradually increase to five days in 2023, seven days in 2024 and 10 days in 2025. The amount of money payable is not fixed in the bill. The amount payable will initially be set at a level of 70% of the employee’s wage, capped at €110 per day. This rate may be amended by a ministerial order. This new scheme will primarily benefit employees who are on low wages, because the employer does not normally pay sick leave for such jobs.

Read on: in English... Read the draft bill: in English...

**Unions unite in pay claim for care workers**

*9 November 2021*

The trade union Fórsa, the general union SIPTU and the nurses and midwives’ union INMO have joined forces with the support of the ICTU confederation to secure a pay rise and establish a collective bargaining forum for workers in the community and voluntary sector. The unions argue that many of these workers provide essential services but have not seen a pay rise since the 2008-09 economic and financial crisis. The aim is for a 3% pay rise this year and to establish a forum for future collective bargaining. The unions have called on the Government to recognise its role in providing funding for community organisations which should be offering decent pay and working conditions.

Read on: in English...
Women are working almost two months for free
8 November 2021

Women in Ireland are effectively working for free for the last 14.4% of the year according to research from WorkEqual today. The WorkEqual research also shows that 74% of people believe closing the gender pay gap is important and should be a priority for government and employers. It found that 67% of people are in favour of pay transparency and believe workers should have the right to know what other colleagues doing the same work are paid.

Read on: in English...

Italy

Union federations call for renewal of agreement in the waste sector
22 November 2021

Following a widely supported national strike, union federations in the waste sector are taking another day of action on 13 December. The unions have been calling for the renewal of the sector agreement which expired 29 months ago and for efforts to ensure that it covers the whole of the sector. Employers have made no offer to increase pay or to compensate workers for the period since the expiry of the last agreement. Unions are calling for investment in the sector and its workers and will be taking their message to local communities as they mobilise for action on 13 December.

Read on: in English... Read on: in Italian...

New provisions for equal treatment at work
19 November 2021

The Italian Parliament has approved a new bill – known as the ‘Gribaudo’ law – with the aim of implementing equal opportunities and treatment for male and female employees in the workplace and to prevent discrimination. Parliament has approved a bill (the ‘Equality Bill’), aimed at strengthening equality between men and women and fighting discrimination in the workplace, by introducing relevant amendments to Legislative Decree No. 198/2006 (known as the ‘Equal opportunities Code’).

Read on: in English... Read on: in English (2)...

Latvia

Employers can dismiss unvaccinated workers
5 November 2021

The Latvian Parliament has given employers the go-ahead to dismiss employees who are required to get vaccinated but refuse to do so. Parliament voted to authorize employers to suspend workers without required vaccination certificates for whom they are unable to make accommodations. Employers must first determine if there is another suitable position available for any affected staff members or if they can fulfil their responsibilities while working from home.

Read on: in English...

Lithuania

New collective agreement in social services
22 November 2021

Social partners have negotiated improvements for workers in social and other public services. The new collective agreement in social services will see minimum monthly pay increased from €642 to €730, while
working hours will be cut by one hour a week. Trade union members covered by the agreement will get an extra day’s leave after 10 years’ service and two additional days’ leave for educational purposes. Across public services, there will be a 2.2% increase in the basic salary.

Read on: in English... Read on: in Lithuanian...

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**Luxembourg**

**Right to disconnect outside working hours**

5 November 2021

The Luxembourg Government is introducing a right for employees to disconnect outside working hours. The bill to introduce a right to disconnect, amending the Labour Code, was submitted to the Chamber of Deputies. The bill, which largely reflects the opinion of the Luxembourg Economic and Social Council (Conseil économique et social, CES) of 30 April 2021 on the right to disconnect, plans to modify the Labour Code in particular by introducing a new section entitled ‘Respect for the right to disconnect’ in the chapter devoted to employers’ obligations in terms of the protection, safety and health of employees.

Read on: in English...

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**Malta**

**Compensation for employees**

24 November 2021

The Maltese Government will be granting payments to those who have suffered an injustice or anomaly in their employment in the past. This year, 5,247 persons will qualify according to the three schemes formulated by the Ministry for Social Justice and Solidarity, the Family and Children’s Rights in collaboration with the Ministry for Finance and Employment. Individuals who will benefit from this scheme will be ex-workers of the disciplined corps as well as former port workers. The payments will amount to a sum of over €9.7 million.

Read on: in English...

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**Netherlands**

**New round of strikes in the metal and technology sector**

24 November 2021

Employees from the metal and technology sector will go on strike again. The Dutch trade unions FNV, CNV Vakmensen and De Unie have announced strikes at companies in the region around Arnhem and Nijmegen. Employees are expected to stop working for 24 hours. Recently, several strikes have taken place in different regions across the country. Hundreds of people took part each time. The strikers are fighting for a higher wage increase, among other things. The employees are also concerned about the many vacancies. With almost 320,000 employees and almost 28,000 employers, the collective agreement for Metal and Engineering is the largest collective agreement in the private sector.

Read on: in English... Read on: in Dutch and English...

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**Trade unions lose members**

3 November 2021

The number of trade union members fell by nearly 100,000 in the past two years. According to Statistics Netherlands, this is a decrease of 6%. The number of union members has been declining for 10 years. In March 2021, there were still about 1.5 million members, 98,000 fewer than in 2019. That is the lowest number of union members since 1966. The average age of union members is rising. Currently, 22% are older
Union density is highest in education (31%) and lowest in the information and communication sector (6%).

**Vote on new collective agreement for the municipal sector**

3 November 2021

Members of the Federation of Dutch Trade Unions (FNV) are voting on whether to support the collective agreement for the municipal sector that was negotiated last month. The agreement provides for a 1.5% pay increase from 1 December 2021 and a further increase of 2.4% from 1 April 2022. There will also be a €1,200 lump-sum payment of which €900 is pensionable and the remaining €300 is a Covid-19 bonus. The agreement also commits municipalities to guarantee a minimum wage of €14 an hour from 1 January 2022.

Read on: in Dutch and English...

Norway

**Plan to abolish ‘au pair’ system**

2 November 2021

The Norwegian Government is keen to scrap the country’s long-criticized ‘au pair’ system, on the grounds that it exploits young people from abroad who work in Norwegian homes. The Government has now proposed phasing out the system entirely and seems likely to win majority support in the Norwegian Parliament. The ‘au pair’ system is supposed to be a form of cultural exchange in which young foreigners can spend up to two years as an ‘au pair’ living on an equal footing with a Norwegian family and learning the Norwegian language. Affluent families, in which both parents usually work outside the home, have been accused of using the ‘au pair’ system to acquire relatively cheap maid and nanny services.

Read on: in English...

Poland

**Unions protest against move to end coal use**

7 November 2021

Trade union members from the energy sector have joined hands to protest against an EU move that discourages the use of coal. Some 200 power plant and coal mine workers blew horns and waved union flags in front of the EU office in Warsaw. The workers argued that the discouragement towards coal usage has led to massive price hikes.

Read on: in English...

Portugal

**One in four workers earns minimum wage**

30 November 2021

About a quarter of workers in Portugal earn the national minimum wage. These are mostly workers in non-standard or temporary employment, women, young people and employees with a lower level of education, who work mostly in small companies. This was reported by the Labour Ministry’s Bureau of Statistics and Planning (GEP). The Prime Minister announced an increase in the minimum wage from €665 to €705.

Read on: in English... Read on: in English (2)...
November 2021

Remote workers could see a healthier work-life balance under new labour laws approved by the Portuguese Parliament. The new rules are a response to the large increase in home working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the new rules, employers could face penalties for contacting workers outside of office hours. Companies will also have to help pay for expenses incurred by remote working, such as higher electricity and internet bills.

Read on: in English... Read on: in English (2)...

Romania

Real wages fall
12 November 2021

Real wages decreased in September as energy prices pushed up inflation, with the trend likely to continue. Rising inflation has gradually eroded the rise in nominal wages during the second and third quarters of 2021. The average net wage increased to RON 3,517 (€711) in September, when it was 5.8% higher than a year earlier. With the inflation reaching 6.3% year-on-year in September, real wages decreased (-0.4% year-on-year) for the first time since early 2013.

Read on: in English...

Serbia

One in 10 unemployed
30 November 2021

According to statistical office data, the unemployment rate stood at 10.5% in the third quarter of 2021, down by 0.6 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. In the third quarter of 2020, Serbia’s jobless rate was 9.8%. In the July-September period, the unemployment rate among men was 9.2% and among women 12.0%. The employment rate increased to 50.0% in the third quarter, up from 47.8% a year earlier. In the second quarter of 2021, the employment rate was 48.3%.

Read on: in English...

Slovakia

Wages grow strongly
11 November 2021

According to statistical office data, in September, the average nominal monthly wage increased in all sectors year-on-year, mostly in accommodation, where it rose by 12.6% to €873. Double-digit growth was also recorded in wholesale by 12.2% (€1,202), sales and repair of motor vehicles by 10.1% (€1,158) and in food and beverage service activities by 11.8% (€626). Wages also grew, year-on-year, in retail trade by 9.3% (€902), in selected market services by 8.4% (€1,126), in construction by 7.9% (€836), information and communication by 7.3% (€2,136), transportation and storage by 5.4% (€1,093), and industry by 5.1% (€1,251).

Read on: in English...
**Slovenia**

**Trade union calls for ratification of convention against violence at work**  
*26 November 2021*

The ZSSS trade union confederation has urged the Government and the Labour Ministry to ratify the convention of the International labour Organization (ILO) concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.

Read on: in English...

**Spain**

**New collective agreement for the metal sector**  
*15 November 2021*

The CCOO de Industria and UGT FICA trade unions and the employer federation Confemetal have ratified the fourth national collective agreement for industry, new technologies and services in the metal sector, which creates a framework for collective bargaining for a period of three years (2021 to 2023). The document, signed on 3 November, will serve as a guide for all branch or company negotiations and all regional agreements at provincial level.

Read on: in English... Read on: in English (2)... Read on: in Spanish...

**Women work 43 days for free**  
*19 November 2021*

According to the General Workers’ Union (UGT), women work 43 days for free, effectively because of the wage gap that still exists in Spain. The union, which has re-launched its awareness campaign #YoTrabajoGratis, says that the average woman earns 11.9% less than her male counterpart. Put differently, that is equivalent to 43 days less pay a year. The union is keen for the EU to adopt a directive on wage transparency and to force countries to comply with the Remuneration Registry and Salary Audit law. They see this as the only way to overcome the disparity in wages.

Read on: in English... Read on: in Spanish...

**Sweden**

**Union confederation approves agreement on employment protection**  
*19 November 2021*

The Board of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation LO has approved the agreement previously reached between the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, PTK and the LO affiliates IF Metall and Kommunal. However, four LO affiliates, Seko, Byggnads, Fastighets and Transport, rejected the agreement. According to the chair of LO, the agreement contains improvements regarding, for example, fixed-term employment. Now, it is up to each union to decide whether they want to sign the agreement in principle or not.

Read on: in Swedish... Read on: in Swedish and English...

**Switzerland**

**Union demands higher wages**  
*19 November 2021*
The Swiss trade union USS launched an offensive for higher wages and better pensions. Its delegates also decided to reject tax incentives intended for high earners. The union is calling for more premium cuts in health insurance: no one should spend more than 10% of their salary on premiums. It is also demanding a thirteenth salary for everyone. One in six employees does not receive a thirteenth salary.

Read on: in French...

Turkey

Unions issue joint statement on minimum wage
30 November 2021

Turkish workers’ unions have issued a joint statement on the current minimum wage negotiations, saying that the minimum wage that is to be effective as of 1 January 2022 should be determined after considering recent developments in the national economy. The joint statement was made by the Confederation of Turkish Labour Unions (Türk-İş) and the Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (Hak-İş). The statement noted that a minimum wage should make it possible for a worker and his/her family to ‘live humanely’ according to current economic and social conditions.

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United Kingdom

Agreement in recycling and waste collection sector
19 November 2021

GMB union members in Sheffield had voted for an all-out strike over concerns about wages from contractor Veolia. Workers have since elected to accept a new two-year deal that includes an annual pay increase and a one-off payment. Refuse collectors in the city had staged single-day strike actions and had threatened an ongoing walkout. The new agreement will see workers receive a backdated 3% increase in year one, a one-off £250 (€294) payment for each employee, and a further 3.5% increase for year two, the union said.

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Financial group offers ‘unlimited holiday’ to prevent burnout
18 November 2021

Financial group finnCap has announced that it intends changing its holiday policy so that, in 2022, employees are free to take unlimited holidays. The 155 employees will also be required to take at least 4 weeks’ holiday per year and 2 or 3 days per quarter, the group said. The aim of these measures is to prevent burnout. The company, which has benefited from the pandemic effect and grown dramatically over the past two years, has also drawn up a list of circumstances in which its employees are allowed to take time off without officially having to take a day off work.

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