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Issue 4/2013 April

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



AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LABOUR STUDIES
UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



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European sources

Worsening conditions in the European public sector

April 24, 2013

In a book published by the ILO the impact of the austerity measures on the public sector is analysed. The immediate pressure to make savings and reduce public spending has led most governments to make cuts to expenditure, jobs and wages – often hastily. The neglect of social dialogue in the reform process and the abolition of a number of provisions that encouraged collective bargaining, have contributed to worsening working conditions in the public sector. Previously known as a ‘model employer’, public sector practices are now converging with those in the private sector.

English: [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/comment-analysis ...](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/comment-analysis...)

IMF policy threatens bargaining traditions

April 24, 2013

In the International Trade Union Confederation’s report *ITUC Frontlines April 2013* the impact of the policy of the International Monetary Fund on collective bargaining is treated. Whilst the report provides empirical evidence demonstrating that there is no sound economic case for the attack on workers’ rights, one of the conclusions is that the IMF policy is a straightforward attack on collective bargaining traditions, based on the experiences in four EU countries (Romania, Greece, Spain and Portugal). Moves from industry- and economy-wide collective bargaining to enterprise bargaining will result in extremely low levels of trade union membership and equally low levels of collective bargaining coverage. And this attack is not confined to the peripheral countries of Europe. Even more successful economies in Europe have been pressed to match or better draconian reforms to maintain their own ‘competitive edge’.

English: http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_frontlines_report_april_2013_web.pdf

United union protests at Holcim Annual General Meeting

April 18, 2013

Trade unionists from Italy, Belgium, France, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Germany and Switzerland came to the Holcim General Annual Meeting in Dübendorf (Switzerland) to protest against planned layoffs and the uncooperative operation of the company. Holcim has announced it will have to close down plants in order to reach a 1.2 billion euro profit. The European Works Council and the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) have demanded decent information and consultation procedures, as well as a postponement of any layoffs until the completion of the consultation round.

English: <http://www.industrialunion.org/over-200-workers-protest-at-holcims-agm>

Social dialogue under strain

April 11, 2013

A report published by the European Commission shows that the on-going economic crisis poses a serious challenge to the dialogue between workers' and employers' representatives and governments. Recent government reforms have not always been accompanied by fully effective social dialogue, leading to increasingly conflictual industrial relations in Europe. The report acknowledges that countries in which social dialogue is well-established and industrial relations institutions are strong, generally are those where the economic and social situation is more resilient and under less pressure.

English: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7498>

European social model weakened

April 9, 2013

During the 9th ILO Regional European Meeting several participants formulated an urgent call for effective employment and social policies that can achieve growth and competitiveness with good jobs. Social dialogue and collective bargaining serve as effective tools to mitigate the impact of the crisis, but in many countries they have been weakened. The final declaration states that there is a need to create positive pathways to overcome negative economic, social and political consequences and restore trust.

English: [http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings ...](http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings...)

Safran Group European Framework Agreement to employ young people

April 5, 2013

IndustriALL and high-technology manufacturer, Safran Group, have signed a European Framework Agreement. The French multinational that specialises in Aerospace Propulsion, Aircraft Equipment, Defense and Security, has promised to invest in the integration of young people into its work force. IndustriALL confirms the goals is to provide 2,000 apprenticeships and traineeships per year over the next 3 years leading to the hiring of 6,000 young people over the same period.

English: <http://www.industriall-europe.eu/news/list2.asp?stid=99>

Austria

Deal on redundancies at Tyrolean Airlines

April 18, 2013

The Tyrolean Airlines works council, the Austrian Airlines (AUA) management, the trade union and the Chamber of Labour agreed on a compromise of a redundancy programme. The agreement is based on three pillars: voluntary redundancies; every employee will have the possibility to enter a foundation in order to use training measures; establishment of a redundancy programme, suitable for the Tyrolean venue.

English: <http://www.friedlnews.com/article/austria-tyrolean-and-aua-agree-on-social-plan>

Social plan negotiations at Triumph

April 18, 2013

Negotiations about a redundancy programme for the lingerie producer Triumph have started between representatives of the trade union, the works council and the management. Two works will be closed and up to 100 people will lose their jobs in the headquarters in Wiener Neustadt. The first redundancies will be made in October 2013 by which time a social plan for the 350 affected staff will be set up. As the company wants to try and reduce uncertainty among their employees, they are all informed on possible steps.

English: http://austriantimes.at/news/Business/2013-04-18/48083/Triumph_Jobs_Discussed
[http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/erm/factsheets/23956/Triumph ...](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/erm/factsheets/23956/Triumph...)

Quarrel over unpaid overtime

April 11, 2013

The Chamber of Labour (AK) and the Chamber of Commerce (WKÖ) have started a row about unpaid overtime after Statistik Austria published data, which state that 69 million overtime hours have not been

paid. AK is not pleased about the problem of unpaid overtime. According to figures used by the WKÖ 94% of employers say that overtime is remunerated.

English: [http://www.austriantimes.at/news/General_News/2013-04-11/47926/Unpaid_overtime ...](http://www.austriantimes.at/news/General_News/2013-04-11/47926/Unpaid_overtime...)

Redundancies at Swarovski

April 4, 2013

Up to 150 redundancies are expected at crystal group Swarovski in Wattens (Tyrol). The company has been struggling with a downfall in demand during the economic crisis and is currently laying off 30 employees, 10 of whom through natural attrition. Media are reporting that later this year up to 150 workers will be laid off in the production department, which employs 2,900 people.

English: [http://austrianindependent.com/news/Business/2013-04-04/13607/Swarovski ...](http://austrianindependent.com/news/Business/2013-04-04/13607/Swarovski...)

Belgium

Day of action for equal employment rights

April 25, 2013

Members of the socialist trade union confederation ABVV/FGTB have held a national day of action to back their demands for equal employment rights for blue and white collar workers. Other demands were related to job security and quality, a decent economic recovery policy and fair and progressive taxation.

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

French: http://www.groups.be/1_61757.htm <http://www.abvv.be/web/guest/home-fr>

Flanders: 15,000 more unemployed than last year

April 3, 2013

The Flemish employment ministry has announced that there are 15,723 more registered unemployed people in Flanders now than in 2012. Unemployment increased most strongly among youth (13.5%) and men (11%), while female unemployment rose more slowly (3.9%) and the unemployment rate of older workers dropped slightly (-0.8%).

English: [http://www.expatica.com/be/news/belgian-news/15000-more-jobless ...](http://www.expatica.com/be/news/belgian-news/15000-more-jobless...)

Renewal of important collective agreements

April 3, 2013

In the last week of March 2013 the social partners concluded a series of collective agreements in the National Labour Council. Important elements of the agreements are the phasing out of the minimum youth wages (for youngsters in the age group 18-20 years a certain percentage of the normal wages was applied in the past), an increase of the minimum payments for pensioners, unemployed and people depending on social benefits, and an improvement of the position of workers that risk to become unemployed after a long period of service.

French: http://www.csc-en-ligne.be/Actualite/Communiqués/detail/accord_CNT.asp

<http://www.cnt-nar.be/Home-FR.htm>

Dutch: http://www.acv-online.be/Actualiteit/Nieuws/Detail/Totaalakkoord_NAR.asp

<http://www.cnt-nar.be/Home-NL.htm>

Bulgaria

Half of companies are single-person companies

April 12, 2013

A report on key macroeconomic indicators provided by the Bulgarian Industrial Association (BIA) states that

nearly half of all registered businesses (46%) don't have even one single employee in addition to the owner. The data further shows that due to the economic crisis and the bad business climate, 350 000 job positions have been closed, along with another 112 000 self-employed people who are out of work.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=149488

The struggle for social rights

April 4, 2013

Twenty years after the fall of the Eastern European block, the transition to a social market democracy has been disappointing. The drastic overhaul of the social-insurance, pension, and health-care systems have sown enormous personal insecurity. The country's radical and extensive privatisation and economic restructuring have led to systemic impoverishment. According to the European Commission Report of March 2013, 49% of the total population and 52% of the children were in 2011 at risk of poverty or social exclusion. For pensioners aged over 65 the situation is markedly worse with the people at risk amounting to 61%. Actually, the economic crisis has escalated into a political one.

English: [http://www.euspeak.eu/bulgarias-rebellions-of-the-hungry-and-the-struggle ...](http://www.euspeak.eu/bulgarias-rebellions-of-the-hungry-and-the-struggle...)

Employers refuse participation in social council

April 2, 2013

Employer representatives in the tripartite social council have submitted an official declaration conveying their refusal to further participate in the council. The employers leave in protest of a law passed by Parliament just before its dissolution, which requires board members of employer organisations and trade unions to publicly disclose all their assets. The trade union representatives have protested that the law is unconstitutional but confirmed they will obey it until it is repealed and continue to participate in the council.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=149191

Croatia

Unions and employers welcome tax authority's attempts to ease debt burden

April 4, 2013

The Chamber of Crafts (HOK) and trade unions have welcomed newly adopted legislation that allows both businesses and citizens to resettle outstanding tax bills. The new legislation allows for interest to be written off and the principle debt to be re-scheduled for payment at a later time. Unions have called the new bill a 'worthy attempt to relieve the impact of the crisis which is worst felt by citizens'.

English: [http://daily.tportal.hr/253229/Businesses-and-unions-welcome-bill-to-write-off ...](http://daily.tportal.hr/253229/Businesses-and-unions-welcome-bill-to-write-off...)

Cyprus

Tripartite meetings over Cyprus Airways social plan

April 23, 2013

The ministry of labour, Cyprus Airways and trade unions are meeting to discuss the implementation of the social plan accompanying the rescue of the airline. One of the issues to discuss is the liquidity of the airline's funds after the 27% tax on its deposits at the former Bank of Cyprus. Presumably, the 450 employees who will be laid off will receive 50% of the conditions in the existing social plan. The arrangement will enter into force on 1 April 2013 and last for three years.

English: [http://famagusta-gazette.com/minister-of-labour-to-meet-cyprus-airways ...](http://famagusta-gazette.com/minister-of-labour-to-meet-cyprus-airways...)

Bank workers strike

April 5, 2013

Bank workers organised a two-hour strike on 4 April because the pensions of the employees have not been

protected in the bail-out process. As reported last month, the workers at the now-defunct Laiki Bank have been affected worse than most. Many borrowed money to buy shares in the bank - now worthless - and fear losing both their jobs and their pensions.

English: [http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130404/business-news ...](http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130404/business-news...)
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22042727>

Czech Republic

Industrial employers expect more layoffs in 2013

April 10, 2013

Interviews by the Confederation of Industry and the Czech National Bank (CNB) indicate that industrial companies expect to be laying off thousands of people in 2013 and think they are unlikely to hire many new employees.

English: [http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/10/industrial-companiesto-scrap ...](http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/10/industrial-companiesto-scrap...)

Governments wants social partners' backing for plan against unemployment

April 9, 2013

The ministers of Industry and Trade and of Labour and Social Affairs have started talks with employers' organisations and trade unions to discuss a plan to tackle unemployment. Trade unions, who already announced they would campaign against the government (see January 2013 newsletter), are suspicious of the time of the plan just ahead of the 2014 general elections. The plan against unemployment contains subsidies to start-ups, businesses that employ people under thirty, lightening the bureaucratic burden on firms, investment in technical education and a raise in the minimum wage. Unemployment is currently at 8%.

English: [http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/10/tripartite-draft-plan-aimed ...](http://praguemonitor.com/2013/04/10/tripartite-draft-plan-aimed...)

Denmark

Teacher lock-out as dispute over hours flares

April 29, 2013

Teachers from state schools throughout the country were locked out in a dispute over hours spent teaching. The government and employers have said teachers need to spend more hours teaching, leaving fewer hours for preparations. Teachers unions have demanded a 25 hour cap on teaching and condemned the government intervention in the negotiations as going against the Nordic model. The government, in turn, have defended the need to prolong the school day in order to improve children's performance. Protesting the lock-out, teachers have formed a 35 kilometre line between two cities. It is expected that the government will intervene to put an end to the school lockout that has stretched to four weeks.

English: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22014697>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22089337>
http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2530
<http://cphpost.dk/news/national/government-poised-end-school-lockout-1>

'Hidden unemployed' not counted

April 24, 2013

Hidden unemployed are potential workers not reflected in official unemployment statistics due to the way the statistics are collected. The number of 'hidden' unemployed workers has doubled during the five years of the financial crisis. Before the crisis, there were about 35,000 hidden unemployed. Today, around 62,000 workers are lost in the shadows of hidden unemployment.

English: <http://cphpost.dk/news/national/jobless-numbers-underreported>

Estonia

Work abroad outpaces internal job creation

April 17, 2013

The 2012 labour market report compiled by the Bank of Estonia found that workers leaving to work abroad outpaced internal job-creation, which grew by 2.2%. The working-age population decreased by 12,700, of whom 5,300 moved abroad. The report says that the fast-paced, post-recession labour market recovery is over.

English: [http://news.err.ee/economy ...](http://news.err.ee/economy...)

Finland

Agency work becomes mainstream

April 28, 2013

In a doctoral thesis (Discussions on hired temporary labour) by Liisa Lähteenmäki it is prescribed how public discourse on temporary work agencies changed from the beginning of 1990's until 2005. She analysed the news from the national newspaper Helsingin Sanomat and the minutes of parliament as well as the minutes and reports of parliament's Employment and Equality Committee. The author criticises trade unions for being slow to recognise the problems in the status of agency labour. Recently, unions have become more active, and one reason behind it has been the increase of foreign agency labour at work places, she concludes. Unions have noticed that employers often prefer agency labour to temporary employment relations as it is easier to get rid of agency labour than employees in temporary employment relations.

English: <http://www.artto.kaapeli.fi/unions/T2013/q17>
<http://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/87692>

Electricians strike after the cancelling of a worksite agreement

April 23, 2013

A work stoppage stems from a contract dispute at the Consti Group concerning a major renovation job in downtown Helsinki. The Electrical Workers' Trade Union charges that the Consti Group, who bills itself as the leading construction company specialised in renovations, has illegally cancelled a contract for refurbishment of the Scandic Continental hotel. The Electrical Employers Association (STTA) considers the strike to be unjustified and illegal.

English: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/need_an_electrician_be_prepared_to_wait ...](http://yle.fi/uutiset/need_an_electrician_be_prepared_to_wait...)

Foreign owners change industrial relations in paper industry

April 18, 2013

The paper, paperboard and pulp industry is increasingly being taken over by foreign owners. While foreign-owned companies employed 3,688 permanent workers and 187 temporary workers in January 2012, by June of the same year the numbers had increased to a total of 14,210, of which 3,236 had temporary contracts. Workers report that health and safety standards have received far more priority than before. However, layoffs are also reported, as well as greater problems in communicating with management due to language barriers.

English: <http://www.artto.kaapeli.fi/unions/T2013/q15>

France

Court rules on redundancy plan

April 27, 2013

Following the proceedings initiated by the CGT metalworkers' trade union and the Aulnay-Sous-Bois affiliate of the SUD trade union the Paris District Court on 26 April 2013 ruled that the group is allowed to pursue the industrial reorganisation project and its implementation after the next meeting of the Central Works Council, scheduled for 29 April 2013. The redundancy plan has been the subject of a social dialogue and was approved after ten negotiation sessions by an agreement signed by five trade unions (CFDT, CFE/CGC, CFTC, FO et GSEA).

English: [http://www.psa-peugeot-citroen.com/en/media/press-releases/paris-district-court ...](http://www.psa-peugeot-citroen.com/en/media/press-releases/paris-district-court...)
[http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/26/us-psa-judge ...](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/26/us-psa-judge...)

Protest of security services

April 12, 2013

In protest over attacks and threats against them and visitors by pickpockets the security staff at the Louvre organised a wildcat action that did not go down well with many visitors. With nine million visitors a year, the museum cannot afford to close its doors for a day but unions warn they are ready to take further action if necessary. More than 100 staff stopped work to denounce raids by organised gangs which they said were growing in number and becoming 'more aggressive', targeting both visitors and staff in the vast galleries.

English: [http://www.euronews.com/2013/04/10/louvre-museum-closes-doors ...](http://www.euronews.com/2013/04/10/louvre-museum-closes-doors...)
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/apr/10/louvre-closed-pickpockets>

Strike at Adecco

April 8, 2013

Trade unions CFDT, CGC, FO and UNSA have called on Adecco workers to go on strike. Adecco recently made known the intention to change its compensation structure, which the unions fear will effectively lead to wage cuts for the workers. The unions furthermore speak up against the lack of social dialogue in the firm, whereas an Adecco spokesperson said the company had been trying to engage in constructive negotiations.

English: [http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/Research-Publications/Daily-News/France ...](http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/Research-Publications/Daily-News/France...)

Sailors strike for employment guarantee

April 2, 2013

Sailors at the services of the National Society Corsica Mediterranean (SNCM) went on strike after rumours that the company intends to hire foreign vessels and crew in order to cut costs of its operation this summer. The sailors, allegedly supported by transport minister Cuvillier, demand that SNCM guarantees employment of its French crews.

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

Germany

Minimum wages legislation nearby?

April 25, 2013

A long road to a legal minimum wage must end soon. That is the slogan of the initiative for a legal minimum wage. The country is one of the few in the EU without a minimum wage (see also the March Newsletter). Political parties agree it's time to end that anomaly. Welfare reforms have increased the pressure on workers to take up low-paid jobs and led to a rise in the number of working poor, which in turn has fuelled a national debate on social justice. Around 5 million workers – some 16% of all employees – currently earn less than the envisaged national minimum wage of €8.50 per hour.

English: <http://olafstorbeck.blogstrasse2.de/?p=1828>
German: <http://www.initiative-mindestlohn.de/handelblatt.pdf>
www.sueddeutsche.de/thema/Mindestlohn

Lufthansa forced to cancel nearly all flights during major one-day strike

April 22, 2013

After the third round of collective agreement negotiations failed, ground staff and cabin crew of Lufthansa staged another major strike on 22 April. The strike grounded nearly all carriers' flights and was called excessive by the company. In the negotiations, trade union Ver.di is demanding a 5.2% wage increase and job guarantees for 33,000 Lufthansa ground staff, plus employees of various subsidiaries as well as cabin crew members who are union members. In its counter offer, Lufthansa only wants to agree to performance based wage increases for smaller groups of workers.

English: [http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/lufthansa-worker-strike-grounds ...](http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/lufthansa-worker-strike-grounds...)
[http://www.france24.com/en/20130422-lufthansa-flights-grounded-staff-strike-airline ...](http://www.france24.com/en/20130422-lufthansa-flights-grounded-staff-strike-airline...)

Strikes at Deutsche Post

April 22, 2013

Workers at Deutsche Post in Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Hessen, North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland Palatinate have organised a warning strike on 17 April. Trade unions are demanding a wage increase of 6% for all workers, with a minimum increase of €140 to ensure the lowest paid workers receive a bigger pay hike. In the second round of collective bargaining negotiations that preceded the warning strikes, Deutsche Post stated it had no intention of giving into the trade union's wage demands. On 22 April, trade union Ver.di announced the strike will be extended to all regions of the country.

English: [http://www.dw.de/german-postal-workers-on-warning-strikes-for-higher-wages ...](http://www.dw.de/german-postal-workers-on-warning-strikes-for-higher-wages...)
[http://postandparcel.info/55376/news/human-resources/deutsche-post-faces-nationwide ...](http://postandparcel.info/55376/news/human-resources/deutsche-post-faces-nationwide...)

Employment guarantees at Coca Cola

April 17, 2013

After eleven bargaining rounds and under pressure of warning strikes, as reported in our January newsletter, Coca Cola and trade union NGG have agreed on a new collective agreement. The collective agreement includes a 3.5% wage increase in 2013, another 3% in 2014 and €100 increase in trainee allowances. The agreement also includes deals on the preconditions for working on Saturdays, as well as employment contracts. There will be no forced redundancies during the period of the collective agreement, 40% of trainee course participants will be hired on permanent contracts and 60% on annual contracts, and temporary workers will receive equal pay after twelve months.

English: <http://cms.iuf.org/?q=node/2406>
[http://cms.iuf.org/sites/cms.iuf.org/files ...](http://cms.iuf.org/sites/cms.iuf.org/files...)

Protest started after Siemens puts jobs at risk

April 11, 2013

The engineering group Siemens has announced a new round of job cuts in its industry division, which employs more than 100,000 people globally. In a presentation the company said 500 jobs would be cut at its Munich headquarters; while a further 500 positions would be lost by reducing the German mechanics factories from four to two. The total workforce will be reduced by 3,000 workers. Meanwhile the protest has started against a planned outsourcing at the Munich IT-plants with more jobs at risk.

English: [http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-11/siemens-industry-unit-plans ...](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-11/siemens-industry-unit-plans...)
<http://www.themunicheye.com/news/Protests-against-job-cuts-at-Siemens-in-Munich-381>

Pay deal at Vattenfall

April 11, 2013

The utility company Vattenfall has reached a deal with the trade unions Ver.di, IG BCE and IG Metall over pay and job security for in total 15,000 workers. It means that Vattenfall will no longer face the risk of strike actions at its power plants. The deal includes a pay rise from 1 March 2013 retrospectively of 2.6%, and a further increase with 1.8% from 1 April 2014. The union demand was higher, but a job security guarantee till 2017 that the company was willing to give made the unions accept the bid. The bargaining partners agreed to restart negotiations if Vattenfall loses the concessions in Hamburg and Berlin that expire at the end of 2014.

English: <http://www.argusmedia.com/News/Article?id=842272>

Strike announcement at Amazon logistics

April 5, 2013

Trade union Ver.di announced that employees of a big warehouse in the city of Leipzig were planning to go on strike. Ver.di hinted that the action might last several days. It would be the first strike ever at a logistics centre of the US online merchant across Germany. The announcement followed a vote in which 97% of union members in Leipzig had thrown their weight behind industrial action in a bid to secure higher wages.

English: [http://www.dw.de/amazon-employees-in-germany-to-strike-over-pay ...](http://www.dw.de/amazon-employees-in-germany-to-strike-over-pay...)

Greece

Mass layoffs in public sector

April 29, 2013

The parliament passed a bill which will see up to 15,500 public-sector workers laid off by 2015. The job cuts are part of the conditions set by the EU and IMF in return for €8.8 billion in emergency loans. About 2,000 civil servants will be laid off by the end of May 2013, with another 2,000 following by the end of the year and a further 11,500 by end-2014, for a total of 15,500. The legislation is the latest wave of the country's severe austerity program. Several hundred demonstrators outside the parliament took part in a protest called by civil servants' union ADEDY, and the private sector GSEE union.

English: [http://www.france24.com/en/20130429-greece-job-cuts-civil-service-austerity ...](http://www.france24.com/en/20130429-greece-job-cuts-civil-service-austerity...)

Strawberry pickers shot as they demand unpaid wages

April 19, 2013

Twenty-seven Bangladeshi strawberry pickers in Manolada were shot by their foremen as they demanded payment of their delayed wages. Some 200 workers went to their foremen to get them to pay the wages, which had not been done in six months. The village of Manolada was in the news in 2008 as well, when migrant workers went on strike over slavery-like conditions.

English: <http://neoskopos.com/news/en/migrant-workers-shot-in-pay-dispute>

Seamen strike against labour reforms

April 16, 2013

Seamen went on strike on 16 April to protest a labour law reform which will significantly weaken collective bargaining rights. The seamen held a 24-hour strike on the day the law was debated in the national Parliament. Railway employees and port workers have joined the strike.

English: <http://www.vcstar.com/news/2013/apr/16/greek-ferry-seamen-launch>
... [http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi ...](http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi...)

Hungary

New labour law comes into force

April 10, 2013

The labour law reform introduced by the Fidesz government has come into force. The law, heavily criticised by trade unions, creates far greater flexibility in the hiring and firing of employees. Even employer organisations, which are generally happy with the law, have expressed their dissatisfaction at the lack of social dialogue in the coming about of the law. Amongst other things, the law creates a three to six month probation period, during which employees can be fired without any reported reason. In case of unfair dismissal, the court no longer holds the power to reinstate workers, but only to impose a fine. The law raises the number of allowed over hours and allows employers more flexibility to change work schedule, however, it also does allow more leave days for workers with children. The law limits employer liability in case of work related accidents and allows employers not to pay wages in case of external influences, such as power cuts. Trade unions also lose some power and protection in favour of works councils. The law restricts the number of trade union officials that receive legal protection to five per workplace, and less in smaller companies.

Union officials' work time exemptions have been reduced and at least 10% of a company's workforce must be members of the union concerned in order to settle collective agreements.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2012/11/articles/hu1211011i.htm>

Focus on Hungarian industrial relations:

http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/country/hungary_4.htm

Iceland

Wage index and real wages

April 23, 2013

The statistical office has published updated figures related to the wage development. The real wage index in March 2013 is 113.7 points, 1.1% higher than in the previous month. In the last twelve months the real wage index has increased by 1.5%. Some wage increases are part of collective agreements signed in 2011 that stipulate a general wage rise of 3.25% in March 2013. Also the 2011 agreement between the Association of Local Authorities and Municipal Employees stipulates a general increase in wages tables, from March 2013.

English: <http://www.statice.is/Pages/444?NewsID=9474>

Ireland

Negotiations Croke Park II continue after union members refuse the deal

April 27, 2013

After the teachers unions were the first to oppose the new Croke Park deal, 290,000 public sector workers refused the Croke Park II cuts by voting ballot. The agreement collapsed after a majority of 14 public sector unions refused the Croke Park deal, which involved longer working hours, pay cuts for higher paid employees and freezes on increments. The Government has announced it will seek further negotiations and renewed its commitment to find a deal. In the absence of the deal, the Government is expected to seek the wanted budget cuts through compulsory redundancies, which will certainly lead to nationwide protests. Public servants face pay cuts and a permanent freeze on increments if they fail to conclude a deal to reduce the public sector pay bill. They will also lose protection from outsourcing and compulsory redundancy.

English: <http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/0403/379532-asti-exams/>

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/0418/382047-pseu-warns-over-industrial-action-if-pay-cuts/>

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/0423/385076-siptu-promissory-note/>

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/0427/386928-croke-park/>

Construction site compliance proposals

April 24, 2013

Employers and workers in any sector or enterprise can agree minimum rates of pay and conditions of employment and can then have that agreement registered with the Labour Court in a list of Registered Employment Agreements (REA). When registered with the Court, these agreements are legally binding, not only of the parties to the agreement but also to others who are in the class, type or group to which the agreements are expressed to apply. A proposed code of practice on compliance with the construction industry Registered Employment Agreement would allow accredited union officials access on building sites.

English: <http://www.irn.ie/>

Focus on the REA rates of pay:

<http://www.labourcourt.ie/labour/labour.nsf/LookupPageLink/HomeRatesOfPay>

Italy

Unions protest as unemployment fund runs out of money

April 14, 2013

Trade unions have organised a protest in front of the Parliament after it became clear that the fund helping factories to put workers on part-time or temporary unemployment benefits to avoid their layoff, will run out of money by June. The unions demand a cash injection of one billion euros into the fund in order to avoid massive layoffs that would further hurt the country's troubled economy. Thousands of people turned up to support the demand.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/14/italy-vote-labour ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/14/italy-vote-labour...)

Unions demand negotiations in public sector

April 9, 2013

Trade unions CGIL, CISL and UIL have called on the government to start collective negotiations in the public sector. The joint demand follows a report that public sector pay fell by 1.6% between 2010 and 2012, which adjusted for inflation implies a 7.2% wage cut.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9431>

Latvia

Metallurgical company in trouble

April 17, 2013

Metallurgical company Liepajas metalurgs seems to be on the verge of insolvency due to insufficient current assets. The company is working on the optimisation of production and administration costs and reviewing the work schedule. Approximately 150 out of 2,300 workers could be laid off, along with salary cuts being introduced.

English: <http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/32826/>

Liechtenstein

Employment report 2012

April 18, 2013

Against the background of the strong increase of the unemployment figures over Europe the data released by the statistical office read like a fairy tale. The unemployment increased in 2012 to 2.4% on average, compared to 2.3% in 2011. Unemployment is highest among youngsters (age group 15-24 year) with 2.7%.

German: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-as-arbeitslosenstatistik_2012

Lithuania

Official unemployment rate has fallen

April 26, 2013

The Statistics Department released data that reveal that the country's official unemployment rate has fallen from 15.3% in 2011 to 13.2% in 2012. This percentage is still above the EU average and the true figure is thought to be much higher as many people prefer to engage in seasonal work abroad instead of registering unemployed at home. In the meantime a proposed minimum wage reform is still under discussion.

English: [http://www.equaltimes.org/news/what-changes-will-lithuanian-education-reforms ...](http://www.equaltimes.org/news/what-changes-will-lithuanian-education-reforms...)

Chief banker says it's time for wage growth

April 3, 2013

The chief economist of the Nordea Bank Lithuania has said that a 6% wage increase would be a reasonable growth this year. The economist, Zygimantas Mauricas, stated that the wage restraint in the last three years, which was by far outpaced by economic development, helped the country to recover economically. Mauricas said 2013 should be a year of wage increases.

English: <http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/32754/>

Luxembourg

Luxair collective agreement negotiations fail

April 18, 2013

Collective agreement negotiations at Luxair have failed, unions report. The trade unions and Luxair started negotiating an agreement about half a year after Luxair unilaterally repudiated the previous agreement in 2012 (see newsletter October 2012). Trade unions have requested the intervention by a national mediation officer.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxair-collective-agreement-negotiations-fail ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxair-collective-agreement-negotiations-fail...)

Prime minister tests tone state of the nation with unions and employers

April 9, 2013

Ahead of his state of the nation speech, prime minister Juncker met with representatives of unions and employers separately. Both meetings were dominated by negative economic outlooks presented by the finance ministry earlier. While unions stressed the importance of holding on to the indexation of wages, employers insisted that letting go of the practice would strengthen the country's competitiveness. Both parties expressed worries over job losses, while employers added that the outsourcing of industries would lead to the further decrease in the availability of low skill jobs. A high level industry advisory board that was recently established does not include trade union representatives.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/view/premier-meets-labour-unions-and-employers ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/premier-meets-labour-unions-and-employers...)

[http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxembourg-union-demands-inclusion-on-new-industry-advisory ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxembourg-union-demands-inclusion-on-new-industry-advisory...)

Focus on indexation of wages:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2010/22/en/1/EF1022EN.pdf>

Nearly 2000 financial sector workers affected by social plans, but sector grows

April 4, 2013

Figures provided by the Labour Ministry reveal that more than 1,900 workers in the financial sector have been affected by social plans since 2008. Meanwhile, the data also reveal that the total number of workers in the financial sector grew over the same period (from 42,946 in December 2008 to 44,000 in December 2012), whereas the number of people employed by banks decreased (from 27,200 to 26,537). Figures on the total number of layoffs were not available.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/view/over-1-900-financial-sector-workers-affected ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/over-1-900-financial-sector-workers-affected...)

Malta

Cost of living adjustment mechanism changed?

April 28, 2013

The government intends to propose changes to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) mechanism to better 'bring it in line with EU expectations'. Changes to the COLA mechanism have always been controversial since the social partners are divided on the issue. While trade unions have been firm against any changes to the system, employers have been lobbying for a total revamp so that increases in wages will not continue to be automatically pegged to the cost of living index. The latter position is said to be preferred by the European Commission.

English: <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130427/local/COLA-may-be-changed ...>

Negotiations look set to start at WasteServ

April 8, 2013

Trade union UHM has brought working conditions at WasteServ to the attention of the Environment minister, who reacted abhorred about the lack of protective gear the workers receive. The minister asked to be further informed and vowed to “set things right”. The employees of WasteServ work without any protection against the dead animals, rats and used sanitary products they come across every day.

English: <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2013-04-08/news/environment-minister ...>

Netherlands

Healthcare deal without biggest union

April 24, 2013

Healthcare unions, ministers and employers agreed a joint approach to reducing spending on healthcare, but the biggest trade union Abvakabo will not sign. The deal involves slashing entitlement to home nursing and shift the care burden to family and friends, leading to a 40% reduction in home nursing levels (against an originally planned 75% cut). The trade unions have agreed to moderate their wage demands and freeze other wage-related spending until 2016. The Abvakabo is particularly angry that tens of thousands of jobs will be lost.

English: http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2013/04/agreement_reached ...

Imtech cuts 1300 jobs

April 23, 2013

The Dutch engineering company Imtech has announced that it will cut 1,300 of its 29,000 jobs, or about 4.5% of its global workforce. Most job cuts would be in the Netherlands and Germany, with about a 10% reduction in staff numbers. The firm, which is investigating irregularities in Poland and Germany and is considering legal action against former management, said that the planned personnel and cost reductions are expected to support the operations' effectiveness and profitability.

English: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/23/us-imtech-jobs ...>

Collective agreement in primary care

April 17, 2013

Trade unions Abvakabo and CNV Publieke Zaak have reached a collective agreement covering staff in primary care, with the exception of general practitioners, apprentice GPs and directors. The agreement, which lasts from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013, contains a wage increase of 1.75% from 1 April onwards. Employers and unions also agreed that the employers will pay to all obligatory trainings for employees, which will be done during working time or paid time outside working hours.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9442>

Dutch: <http://www.abvakabofnv.nl/nieuws/nieuws/517215-principeakkoord-cao ...>

<http://www.mijnvakbond.nl/Zorg-nieuws-Principeakkoord-CAO-Huisartsenzorg ...>

Tripartite deal softens austerity

April 20, 2013

The social partners and the government have concluded a tripartite agreement on the labour market reform. The negotiations are a traditional part of the “polder model” of economic policy making including all stakeholders. As part of the agreement negative proposals to change the unemployment benefits scheme will be reversed. The three signatories hope the accord will revive public confidence. A €4.3 billion raft of cuts planned for 2014 has been put on ice. In the meantime a strong majority in the ranks of the trade union confederations backs up the deal.

English: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/o ...>

<http://amsterdamherald.com/index.php/election-2012-blog ...>

Dutch: <http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article ...>

<http://www.fnv.nl/nieuwsberichten/1233641/>

<http://nos.nl/artikel/497819-hele-fnv-achter-sociaal-akkoord.html>

Focus on the Dutch tripartite and bipartite dialogue:

http://www.fnv.nl/site/media/pdf/95491/The_social_dialogue_in_the_Netherlands.pdf

Striking workers at Unilever win better deal

April 15, 2013

Workers at Unilever who went on strike last month to protest against the company's plans to outsource the facility management services employees to Sodexo (see March newsletter) have closed an agreement with Unilever. The workers demanded a transfer of working conditions to their new employer, which Unilever initially refused. After six weeks of strike, Unilever agreed to enter negotiations. On 12 May, the striking workers accepted a deal, which includes improved pension compensation for transferred employees serving up to ten years with Sodexo, a three year job guarantee and a safeguard against split shifts.

English: <http://cms.iuf.org/?q=node/2401>

Norway

Dock workers block port to force compliance with collective agreement

April 12, 2012

Unionised dock workers blocked the port of Drammen to keep a vessel being unloaded by unregistered dockers. The Norwegian-owned ship was carrying goods from Estonia under the Barbados flag, attempting to have it unloaded by unregistered Polish workers. The port's collective agreement states that all ships must be unloaded by registered dockers, but talks to achieve compliance this point have failed to yield results. In reaction, unionised workers have forced compliance by blocking access for unregistered workers. Three hours after the start of the blockade, the Port Authority sent in registered workers to unload the ship.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index.cfm ...>

Strike off-shore suppliers sea platforms narrowly averted

April 8, 2013

Workers at on-shore supply bases of the country's many platforms have announced a strike. The unions are currently negotiating a wage agreement with the offshore contractors, in which little progress was being made. On the very last moment, unions accepted a wage offer of 3.4%, averting industrial action.

English: <http://www.upstreamonline.com/live/article1322371.ece>

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/08/uk-norway-strike ...>

Poland

Silesia region general strike might turn national

April 24, 2013

The trade unions that organised a two-hour general strike in the Silesia region, reported in the March 2013 newsletter, have now warned they will resort to a nationwide general strike if the government fails to address trade union issues in its labour law reform. The trade unions have repeatedly expressed themselves against so-called 'junk contracts' but talks with the government on 24 April 2013 failed to yield any agreement.

English: <http://www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/133801,Solidarity-threatens-nationwide-strike>

<http://sofiaglobe.com/2013/04/25/unionists-in-poland-threaten-general-strike-as-talks ...>

Portugal

Workers protest against privatisation of water supply

April 15, 2013

Workers at publicly owned water company Aguas de Portugal (AdP) are protesting against the announced privatisation of its services. Trade union spokespersons have argued water supply, sewerage and waste services are services of general interests that must not be left to the market. The workers furthermore protest against AdP's attempts to repudiate its collective agreement in order to be more attractive to investors.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9434>

Court rejects austerity measures

April 5, 2013

The Constitutional Court ruled that planned cuts in salaries to state workers and payments to pensioners were in breach of the constitution. It rejected four austerity measures, including planned cuts in public sector pay and state pensions, after scrutinising articles of the 2013 budget. According to the court it was 'unfair' to single public sector workers out. Cuts in sickness and unemployment benefits were also rejected.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/05/us-portugal-austerity-court ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/05/us-portugal-austerity-court...)

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/o ...](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/o...)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/feedarticle/10733675>

One worker dies every day on the job

April 4, 2013

The Authority for Work Conditions (ACT) has released research results indicating that on average, one worker dies each day in Portugal due to a work related accident. The ATC also confirmed that many more accidents lead to temporary or permanent disabilities. The ATC is starting an awareness raising campaign on the improvement of health and safety standards in the work place.

English: [http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/one-worker-dies-every-day-in-portugal ...](http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/one-worker-dies-every-day-in-portugal...)

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Romania

New railway strike over unpaid wages

April 17, 2013

After a two-hour strike reported in the January newsletter, locomotive service unit workers at CFR railways operator organised another spontaneous strike. The workers are demanding payment of their long overdue wages. Earlier this month CFR promised payment, then announced a slight delay. When this was followed by a later message that they had attempted to transfer the wages but that the banks had frozen the CFR accounts, the workers went on strike again.

English: [http://www.romania-insider.com/workers-of-romanian-railways-operator ...](http://www.romania-insider.com/workers-of-romanian-railways-operator...)

Civil servants may pay solidarity tax on salaries above €1000

April 10, 2013

The government has revived an old proposal for a 10% solidarity tax on wages of public sector employees earning over €1,000 per month. The tax is meant to be a temporary measure and its revenues will go into the funding of energy subsidies or the recalculated pensions of military personnel. The tax will apply to all workers in the public sector as well as in companies owned wholly or in majority by the government. Public sector unions have announced they will fight the tax, which they consider discriminatory and unwarranted considering the 25% wage cut that civil servants took in 2010. The leader of the liberal coalition partner also expressed disagreement with the tax, claiming that the party is against raising taxes and that the revenues from the solidarity tax would be too small to make any difference on the state budget. Prime minister Ponta also said the government coalition is considering a tax reform towards a more progressive system.

English: [http://www.romania-insider.com/solidarity-tax-on-state-wages-above-eur-1000 ...](http://www.romania-insider.com/solidarity-tax-on-state-wages-above-eur-1000-...)
[http://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-ruling-coalition-leaders-publicly-disagree ...](http://www.romania-insider.com/romanian-ruling-coalition-leaders-publicly-disagree-...)

Consultancy firm employs 700 workers without contracts

April 5, 2013

In a large scale operation against noncompliance with labour regulations, labour inspectors came across a consultancy firm that employed 700 workers without contracts, 54 of whom had not reached the legal minimum age. In total, the inspection reported 700 companies who had employed a total of 3,200 workers without legal labour contracts between December 2012 and April 2013. Experts said this is an improvement compared to previous years and attribute it to higher fines deterring employers from breaking the law.

English: [http://www.romania-insider.com/authorities-discover-romanian-employer ...](http://www.romania-insider.com/authorities-discover-romanian-employer-...)

Serbia

Country-wide warning strike by construction workers

April 18, 2013

Over 25,000 construction workers participated in a one hour warning strike on 12 April. The workers demand regular payment of salaries, a safe working environment and a normal eight-hour working day. A spokesperson of the Trade Union of Construction and Building Materials Industry Workers said the construction workers would go on an indefinite strike if the government failed to intervene to improve conditions in the sector within thirty days.

English: <http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Index=4869&Language=EN>

Slovakia

Shrinking of self-employment

April 13, 2013

In the first two months of 2013 around 5,500 sole proprietors, working on the basis of so-called trade licences, delisted from the business register. The drop came after an even more considerable decrease in December 2012, when 8,000 people delisted, while about 1,000 new trade licenses were registered. The labour ministry expressed satisfaction and explained that one of the reasons for raising payroll taxes for self-employed people, a measure which came into force in January 2013, was to force some of them to cease operating as sole traders.

English: [http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/49713/3/self_employment_continues ...](http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/49713/3/self_employment_continues-...)

Slovenia

Sanitec workers on strike

April 24, 2013

Workers at Sanitec, a subsidiary of the foundry group MLM went on strike demanding payment of their wages. Some 200 workers protested for their wages as well as for clarity on the future of the firm, whose mother company MLM is facing large financial problems.

English: [http://www.sta.si/en/vest.php ...](http://www.sta.si/en/vest.php-...)

Spain

Strikes at Madrid metro

April 17, 2013

Metro workers in Madrid have announced a series of strikes to protest the impossible choice they have been given. The municipality has asked workers to choose between a 10% wage cut across the board or accepting 720 redundancies. Trade unions have reacted they accept a plan for early retirement at 58, but do not accept the wage cuts or the forced redundancies. Strikes will be organised on several day, including the bank holiday of San Isidro (15 May) and a day of the football match between Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid. The strikes will take place during the afternoon rush-hour.

English: [http://www.nzweek.com/world/madrid-metro-workers-to-strike-on-wage-job-cuts ...](http://www.nzweek.com/world/madrid-metro-workers-to-strike-on-wage-job-cuts)

Trade unions wonder if negotiations will be in good faith

April 17, 2013

Trade unions UGT, CCOO, SATSE, CSIF and USAE have been invited by the minister of health for a meeting. While the unions confirm their presence, they also stated fearing that the meeting is merely convened to meet the ministry's legal obligation to annual collective negotiations. The unions remember that in 2012, they were invited once and were never involved in any social dialogue concerning the far going cuts and reforms in the public sector. The unions also note the invitation was only received after they lodged a common complaint about the lack of a structured dialogue.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9444>

Spanish: [http://www.fspugt.es/FSPUGT_acoge_con_reservas_la_convocatoria ...](http://www.fspugt.es/FSPUGT_acoge_con_reservas_la_convocatoria)

Sweden

Collective agreement for white-collar local government workers, blue-collar workers strike

April 29, 2013

A four-year collective agreement has been reached for white-collar local government workers. The agreement includes a 2.6% and 2.2% wage increase for all workers in the first and second year, to be followed by individual increases in the last two years. Trade union Vision said it hopes the individual wage increases will reduce inequalities in the pay structure. The collective agreement also includes a number of family friendly policies. Meanwhile, blue-collar local government unions have announced industrial action as their collective negotiations have so far failed. A 6.8% wage increase is being discussed. However, unions want the increase to take the form of a flat rate (1740 SEK or €205) in order to reduce inequalities.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9438> <http://www.epsu.org/a/9437>

New agreement for transport workers

April 26, 2013

A strike by members of the Swedish Transport Workers' Union (STWU) was called off after just 45 minutes yesterday following agreement with the Swedish Road Transport Employers Association (SRTEA) on a new contract for workers. The new agreement for port and road haulage workers has been agreed for 37 months and corresponds to the contract that the industrial sector has signed. It stipulates a three step wage increase.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/press-area/index.cfm/pressdetail/8869>

<http://www.goteborgdaily.se/news/transport-workers-call-off-strike>

Collective agreement in industrial sector

April 12, 2013

Trade unions, IF Metall Union, Unionen, Sveriges Ingenjörer s and employer organisation Teknikföretagens have concluded a new collective agreement for the industrial sector. The agreement contains a 6.5% wage increase over three years, additional parental rights, overtime requirements and more flexibility in working time arrangements. The parental insurance will cover 10% of the wage loss during parental leave; the period is increased from 5 to 6 months. The agreement runs until March 2016 and covers 500,000 workers.

English: [http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/Research-Publications/Daily-News/Sweden ...](http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/Research-Publications/Daily-News/Sweden)

Strike averted as collective agreement is closed in building sector

April 2, 2013

A strike of construction workers was called off, as negotiators from trade unions and employers organisations reached a deal on a new collective agreement. One of the last disputed points of the negotiations concerned primary contractors' responsibility to ensure that subcontractors abide by the collective agreements. Employers argued the clause would make it impossible to hire foreign subcontractors, but unions referred to existing clauses in collective agreements in other Nordic countries. As a part of the deal, a working group will now be established to explore ways of writing primary contractor responsibility into collective agreements.

English: <http://www.thelocal.se/jobs/?site=tlse&AID=47080>

Switzerland

Protest against lay-offs

April 11, 2013

Workers at Hotel Capitole in Geneva went on strike to protest against lay-offs during the temporary closure of the hotel for renovation. Their employer, Capitole Management SA, is in advanced talks with Accor, the French transnational hotel operator, for a management contract at the re-opening. Workers asked to be employed in one of the other 11 hotels that Accor operates in Geneva and to be re-hired at the re-opening. During a meeting with trade union Unia and workers' representatives, both Capitole Management and Accor refused to find solutions for workers affected by the closure. The strike is the first in a Geneva hotel for 10 years. The company has responded by forcing workers from its other hotels to move to Hotel Capitole to replace their striking colleagues.

English: [http://www.4-traders.com/news/IUF-International-Union-of-Food-Agricultural ...](http://www.4-traders.com/news/IUF-International-Union-of-Food-Agricultural-...)

Unions take right to strike issue to ILO

April 10, 2013

Trade unions have filed a complaint with the ILO for infringement of their right to strike. In the end of 2012, workers of the Neuner hospital went on strike when it became clear that the hospital's new owner intended to repudiate the collective agreement and worsen working conditions. The hospital then sacked the workers on strike, who took their employer to court for illegally dismissing them. However, after Swiss courts have upheld the dismissals, the unions now take the case to the ILO.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9447>

German: [http://www.vpod.ch/aktuell/nachrichten/ansicht/article/der-vpod-reicht ...](http://www.vpod.ch/aktuell/nachrichten/ansicht/article/der-vpod-reicht-...)

French: [http://www.ssp-vpod.ch/actualites/nouvelles/ansicht/article/le-ssp-depose ...](http://www.ssp-vpod.ch/actualites/nouvelles/ansicht/article/le-ssp-depose-...)

Turkey

Turkish Airlines agrees to talks after strike notice

April 27, 2013

After declining an invitation to collective bargaining earlier this month, Turkish Airlines agreed to talks when union members voted in favour of strike actions. Trade union Hava-İş, of which 14,000 of the airline's 15,800 workers are members, called on Turkish Airlines to resolve their disagreements through collective negotiations. One of the outstanding issues is the union's demand to undo the dismissal of 305 workers who participated in a strike in May 2012, as reported in this newsletter.

English: [http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-airlines-and-workers-to-talk ...](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-airlines-and-workers-to-talk-...)

Tea plant workers organise largest public sector strike in 20 years

April 22, 2013

Over 10,000 workers at 58 factories of publicly owned tea processing company Çaykur went on strike demanding payment of outstanding wages and compensations for foregone wage increases during the last five years when no collective agreement was in place. Tekgida-Is, the trade union representing the tea plant workers, has written to the employers' organisation and the government to initiate negotiations in good faith.

English: <http://cms.iuf.org/?q=node/2417>

United Kingdom

Ballot over 1% pay offer

April 25, 2013

A pay offer of 1%, made by the Local Government Association, received differing responses from the trade unions representing local government workers. GMB, UNISON and Unite are to ballot members over the offer. With this offer a three-year pay freeze is broken, but there is disappointment that only 1% is on the table. Local government workers have seen a 16% decline in the value of their pay in the last three years, coupled with significant local attacks on terms and conditions.

English: [http://union-news.co.uk/2013/04/local-government-unions-to-ballot-members ...](http://union-news.co.uk/2013/04/local-government-unions-to-ballot-members...)

Strike at Hewlett Packard

April 22, 2013

Workers at Hewlett Packard will go on strike on 29 April 2013 over a dispute on wages and layoffs. The workers rejected an HP wage offer of 1.6% and are outraged over an expected loss of 1,300 to 1,500 jobs in the company's UK offices in 2013 and 2014. Preceding the strike, an overtime ban will be in place from 26 April 2013 onwards.

English: [http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Apps/uni.nsf/pages ...](http://www.uniglobalunion.org/Apps/uni.nsf/pages...)

Pay dispute unresolved after more than a year

April 12, 2013

Union members of the Nautilus trade union at Orkney Ferries are continuing to work to rule after the council continued to refuse to make an acceptable pay offer. The Orkney Island Council offered 1% increase in pay — well below the current inflation rate. Union members voted to take action short of a strike in March, but said they did not want to stage a full walk-out because of the damaging impact it could have on the islands' population who rely on the lifeline services. The union is now seeking direct talks with councillors in the Northern Isles, as the pay dispute for the ferry workers remains unresolved after a year.

English: [http://union-news.co.uk/2013/04/solid-ferry-workers-n-4-month-orkney ...](http://union-news.co.uk/2013/04/solid-ferry-workers-n-4-month-orkney...)

Trade union Unite proposes general strike

April 8, 2013

In a document submitted to the Trades Union Congress (TUC), the trade union Unite, which has 1.4 million members, is calling for a 24-hour general strike against austerity measures. The proposal will be discussed at a meeting of the TUC's general council on 24 April 2013. No strike date has yet been suggested.

English: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-22029895>
[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9977306/Millions-will-answer-call ...](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9977306/Millions-will-answer-call...)

Walkout as part of a three-month campaign of industrial action

April 5, 2013

After tens of thousands of civil servants, including staff in jobcentres, courts and driving test offices staged a half-day strike that caused 'massive disruption' the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) trade union predicted that the dispute over pay, pensions and working conditions in the public sector is to be escalated.

PCS told a rally outside the Cabinet Office in Westminster that a week of strikes will be launched at the Home Office and UK Border Agency from 15 April, with different groups of workers taking action at different times.

English: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22035369>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/apr/05/civil-servants-strike-pay-guerrilla-war>

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