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Issue 10/2012 | November

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

Social dialogue weak in the face of major budget cuts

November 26, 2012

The European Work and Employment Research Centre published a comparative report on public sector pay and procurement during the crisis. Studying developments in France, Germany, Hungary, Sweden and the UK, the EWEREC concludes that social dialogue arrangements in the public sector that existed in the good times were often circumvented in the last years when cut backs were made. The authors of the report call special attention to flawed outsourcing and public tendering procedures that fail to uphold working conditions and pay levels.

English: [https://research.mbs.ac.uk/european-employment/Ourresearch/Currentprojects ...](https://research.mbs.ac.uk/european-employment/Ourresearch/Currentprojects...)

Social partnership in times of crisis

November 22, 2012

Eurofound published a report that illustrates the role of social partnership in times of crisis. The social partners have been involved in the decision-making process and the implementation of anti-crisis measures throughout the crisis at different levels. The authors conclude that the cushioning of the effects of the crisis was more effective in countries with strong social dialogue. However, the crisis has also accentuated pre-existing weaknesses in social dialogue, adhering to path dependent pre-crisis trends. An increase in unilateral decision-making by governments on issues affecting the public sector and the increasing decentralisation of collective bargaining at company level constitute challenges made manifest by the crisis.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/21/en/2/EF1221EN.pdf>

European day of action against austerity

November 14, 2012

Unions in 23 countries mobilised against austerity on 14 November. The day of action, organised by the ETUC, was scheduled to signal the unions' opposition to austerity measures and solidarity with workers falling victim to the cuts. Some 50 trade union organisations from 28 countries participated actively. Actions included protest marches and strikes. ETUC General Secretary Bernadette Ségol commented that Europe's leaders should recognise the full magnitude of the European mobilisation.

According to Ségol the path of austerity is a total failure.

English: [http://www.industrialunion.org/14-november-day-of-action-and-solidarity ...](http://www.industrialunion.org/14-november-day-of-action-and-solidarity-...)
<http://www.etuc.org/r/1897>

Labour market developments in Europe

November 1, 2012

DG Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission published a report on the European economy with a large section on collective bargaining. According to the EC the changes in collective bargaining structures and wage setting arrangements have been largely supportive of rendering wages more responsive to economic conditions at firm level. Measures taken towards decentralisation of collective bargaining include the ending of national collective bargaining (Romania), applying sectoral collective agreement to signatory parties only (e.g. Romania, Greece), the predominance of firm level/lower level collective agreements over higher levels (e.g. Spain, Greece), new criteria on trade union representativeness (Italy, Romania) and on the validity of company-level agreements (Italy), and the possibility of opting-out from law and national collective agreements (Italy). In addition, wage flexibility has been supported by temporary restrictions to the application of the wage indexation system in Luxembourg and Cyprus. Appendix 1 lists reforms that are 'potentially leading to better employment outcomes (henceforth employment-friendly reforms)': decrease of bargaining coverage, reduction of bargaining power of unions, decentralisation and introduction of derogations.

English: [http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy ...](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy...)

Annual review 2011 on industrial relations and working conditions

November 1, 2012

A recent EIRO review describes the developments in industrial relations and working conditions in 2011 in the EU Member States and Norway, at both national and EU level, with a focus on the economic situation and responses to it. The third chapter of this annual review illustrates developments in industrial relations, in particular collective bargaining levels (at cross-sectoral, sectoral and company levels), changes in the organisation and role of social partners, working time, pay developments, industrial action and company restructuring and other significant developments in the countries covered by the Dublin based organisation.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/comparative/tn1203020s/tn1203020s.pdf>

Austria

Improvement of temporary workers' wages

November 28, 2012

On the special website for temporary workers the result of the recent wage bargaining is explained. The trade union PRO-GE negotiated an increase of the wages for around 65,000 workers in the sector. The pay increase is 3.4%. The minimum wage will increase to € 1,427.92. The agreement is as from 1 January 2013. From that date on the revised rules on posting will be also applicable. On the website information is provided in Turkish, Polish and Czech.

German: [http://www.leiharbeiter.at/servlet/ContentServer ...](http://www.leiharbeiter.at/servlet/ContentServer...)

Shortage of postal staff might lead to Christmas chaos

November 19, 2012

Postal union officials have warned of long queues of people hoping to send parcels and cards this Christmas because of the shortage of staff. The union wants a fresh look at the human resources policy of the Post Office saying that up until now managers had refused to discuss the matter. An Austrian post office spokesman rejected the allegation that there had been 40 jobs lost in Salzburg. He also said

that there was reserve staff to be called on during Christmas.

English: http://www.austriantimes.at/news/Business/2012-11-19/45524/Postal_workers_...

German: <http://salzburg.orf.at/news/stories/2559491/>

Wage dumping at state railway?

November 15, 2012

After a serious accident in South Tyrol resulting in a ban on the state railway ÖBB carriages going into Italy a report revealed that the state railway system could be facing a multi-million pound bill if Italian officials are correct, and that many of its goods wagons have got faulty wheels thanks to outsourcing in Eastern Europe. Trade unionists say that while the future of the ÖBB factory in Salzburg has been put under threat because of the move to switch work to Slovakia – the accident proves it was the wrong decision and they accused management of wage dumping.

English: http://www.austriantimes.at/news/Business/2012-11-15/45465/%D6BB_accused_...

Kraft foods transfers premises to Germany

November 7, 2012

A total of 35 jobs will be slashed when Kraft Foods Austria, soon to be known as Mondolez, transfers its premises from Vienna to a new plant in Germany in 2013. The profitable company is the first victim in the division of Kraft Food Inc. into Kraft Foods Group and Mondolez International as of October 2012. The 35 employees affected have already been informed of the company's decision. Together with the works council the trade unions PRO-GE and GPA-djp have prepared the negotiations on a redundancy agreement. Some of the employees will be offered early retirement whilst others will have the opportunity to switch to the company's office in Vienna.

English: http://www.austriantimes.at/news/General_News/2012-10-31/45137/Jacobs_...

German: <http://wien.orf.at/news/stories/2556791/>

<http://www.proge.at/servlet/ContentServer...>

Collective agreement for the whole metal sector concluded

November 1, 2012

At first sight it looked as if there would be a split outcome during the autumn negotiations for the metal sector (see the July/August Newsletter), but after 7 weeks of hard separate negotiations with 6 different branch organisations on the employer side the trade unions PRO-GE and GPA-djp reached a uniform agreement on 30 October for the whole metal industry (180,000 workers). The decision to split up in separate branch negotiations, instead of the use of the usual voluntary negotiation body for all branches, made this year's negotiations complicated and the unions see it as a burdensome and inefficient exercise. The collective agreement is valid from 1 October 2012 with a duration of 12 months. Minimum pay increases with 3.4% (to a level of €1,636.35). The remuneration of apprentices has also increased by 3.4%.

English: <http://www.industrial-union.org/pay-rise-for-austrian-metalworkers>

German: <http://www.proge.at/servlet/ContentServer...>

Belgium

Railway strike against austerity

November 14, 2012

Unions in Wallonia joined the ETUC European Day of Action and Solidarity by calling for a railway strike that crippled train travel in the entire country. Due to effective action in the Brussels stations, nearly no trains were running until 4pm. Unions in Flanders did not join the call to strike but did cover workers joining the action.

English: [http://www.zapaday.com/event/469873/o/Belgian+rail+workers ...](http://www.zapaday.com/event/469873/o/Belgian+rail+workers+...)
<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2274195&Language=en>

Bankruptcies to an all-time record

November 8, 2012

October 2012 brought an all-time high in bankruptcy figures. The number of bankruptcies published in the Belgian Official Journal went up to 1236 (compared to 938 in September 2012). In the first eight months of this year the total number of bankruptcies recorded is 6,764 (in 2011, this number was 6,444), which is 4.97% more than during the same period last year. The increase is almost entirely noted within the Flemish Region with a clear increase of the number of bankruptcies within the catering, the wholesale and the construction sectors.

English: <http://www.graydon.be/publicnew/default.aspx?i=144>

Dismissals Philips Lighting announced

November 5, 2012

In an extraordinary meeting of the works council the management of the Philips Lighting Turnhout plant announced a transfer of the production of LED-lighting to Asia. As a consequence 354 jobs will be cut. The unions criticized this decision: the plant is profitable and wages costs are low (4-6% of the total costs). Philips, maker of consumer electronics, medical equipment, and lighting systems, announced the first round of 4,500 job cuts in Europe in October 2011 and negotiations are still underway regarding a social plan for that plan. In September 2012 the central management in the Netherlands said another 2,200 jobs would be cut, mainly in the lighting units in Europe, but the company refused at that time to indicate where. After Eindhoven, Roosendaal, Lommel, Turnhout and Winschoten the Belgian and Dutch unions fear a 'domino-effect' all over Europe.

English: <http://in.reuters.com/finance/stocks/PHG.N/key-developments/article/2605679>

Dutch: [http://trends.knack.be/economie/nieuws/bedrijven/philips-vakbonden-laken ...](http://trends.knack.be/economie/nieuws/bedrijven/philips-vakbonden-laken...)

[http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/nieuws/nieuwsarchief/2012/november ...](http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/nieuws/nieuwsarchief/2012/november...)

Focus on the social dialogue at Philips Lighting:

[http://tradeunionfreedom.fnvcompanymonitor.nl/perch/resources ...](http://tradeunionfreedom.fnvcompanymonitor.nl/perch/resources...)

Bulgaria

Wage increase only for the high salaries

November 19, 2012

Data released by the Bulgarian Industrial Chamber and published by the 24 Chassa (24 Hours) daily reveal that the average monthly wage went up by BGN 48 (€24.50) in the first nine months of 2012, from BGN 720 (€367.50) in January to BGN 768 (€392) in September. The report shows that only high salaries are going up, while the low ones, including the minimum wage, stay at the same level or register slim increases.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=145252

Civil servants get 10% wage increase

November 13, 2012

The government has confirmed that civil servants will receive a 10% pay increase as of 1 January 2013; teachers will get an 11% pay hike. Civil servants will not receive a Christmas bonus this year, but pensioners will. This will be the first increase in civil servant salaries since 2009.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=145086

Wage growth predicted at 4%

November 3, 2012

Wages are set to grow with around 4% or a little above, according to data presented at an HR forum in Sofia. According to the data, the services sector has marked the highest salary growth (9%) and, as a whole, the IT and pharmaceutical sectors retain the highest salaries in Bulgaria. Other data revealed that the average monthly wages and salaries in Bulgaria decreased in the third quarter of 2012, compared with the second quarter of 2012, by 0.5%. In comparison with a year earlier, the average monthly wages and salaries in the public sector grew by 5.0%, in the private sector by 10.4%.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=144750
http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=144968

Croatia

Schools closed as strike is complete

November 29, 2012

Nearly all schools were closed on 29 November as the nation's teachers staged a warning strike in protest of the cancellation of the basic collective agreement for public-sector services and against proposed new salary cuts for teachers. The minister of education announced that would be made of those teachers who participated in the strike and they will not be paid their salary for today.

English: <http://www.croatiaweek.com/schools-close-as-teachers-strike/>

Health workers protest over cuts

November 29, 2012

Trade unions in the health care sector have announced a day of action for 29 November. The protest comes in reaction to the newly presented budget, which foresees large cuts in the state sector. The unions have said the budget does not allow for the state to comply with its obligations under the collective agreement. Government officials have already made known they intend to change the collective agreements. The global union PSI and EPSU have made statements in support of the Croatian unions, expressing its outrage at the neglect of collective bargaining rights.

English: <http://www.epsu.org/a/9081> [http://www.croatiaweek.com/2013-budget ...](http://www.croatiaweek.com/2013-budget-...)

Construction workers strike for pay

November 13, 2012

Workers of the company Konstruktor went on strike, demanding six months' unpaid wages. The workers gathered in front of the company's headquarter in Split and also claimed two years of unpaid national insurance contributions. Workers are on strike at four major construction sites in Croatia where they build a highway. On some locations the union reports that workers were even left without electricity, heat or water. The company is active in neighbouring countries in general construction works and the construction of motorways, tunnels, bridges and other road facilities.

English: <http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Index=4537&Language=EN>
[http://www.croatiantimes.com/news/Business/2012-10-31/30562/Konstruktor ...](http://www.croatiantimes.com/news/Business/2012-10-31/30562/Konstruktor-...)

Cyprus

Abuse of domestic workers

November 4, 2012

A case of a Nigerian cleaning woman has served to highlight the systemic symptoms of a deficient domestic workers employment system, geared towards protecting the employer and demeaning trafficking victims. According to a retired policeman who now works with the Cyprian Samaritans OFW Foundation Incorporation the call to the labour relations office provided a parody of a trial. After a domestic worker files a complaint against their employer, they have two choices until a final decision is made, go back to the employer they have accused to work, or sit and wait. They are not allowed to work elsewhere.

English: <http://www.cyprus-mail.com/cyprus/mercy-flawed-system/20121104>

Czech Republic

Health workers organise four-country protest

November 21, 2012

Health workers in the Visegrád countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) have organised joined protests against privatisation and low wages in the health care sector. Czech health care workers, who already achieved a pay rise in March 2011, focused their protests on rising insurance costs, cuts in hospital beds and privatisation, which are feared to lead to job losses and worse service. Unions said that insurance companies have not renewed contracts with a number of hospitals and fear these hospitals might be forced to close down. Government officials have reacted the country has too many hospital beds, as much as twice the number per inhabitant compared to Sweden.

English: [http://praguemonitor.com/2012/11/21/health-workers-hold-protest ...](http://praguemonitor.com/2012/11/21/health-workers-hold-protest...)

Stop to the government demonstration

November 18, 2012

A broad coalition of trade unions, NGO's and other civic groups, united in the platform 'Stop to the Government', mobilised thousands in a demonstration and a march in Prague on November 17. The leadership of the trade union CMKOS said the government had lost the mandate to lead the country after the recent regional and Senate elections and that this is the worst government the country has had. The protest event under the motto 'Democracy Looks Different' was held on the day of the Velvet Revolution that toppled the communist regime in 1989.

English: [http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/news/zpravy/czech-stop-to-the-government ...](http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/news/zpravy/czech-stop-to-the-government...)
<http://news.iafrica.com/worldnews/827928.html>

Denmark

Downward spiral continues at Vestas

November 7, 2012

With a previous round of 3,700 layoffs not yet finished (see the July/August Newsletter), the turbine manufacturer Vestas has released third quarter figures showing that 3,000 more workers will soon be licensed. The company announced that it was seeking to reduce its workforce to 16,000 by the end of 2013. At the end of 2011 the company employed nearly 23,000 people. When all is said and done, Vestas will have reduced its workforce 30 per cent.

English: [http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/2223194/battered-vestas-confirms ...](http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/2223194/battered-vestas-confirms...)
<http://cphpost.dk/business/vestas-continues-downward-spiral-3000-new-job-cuts>

Danske bank plans to cut 3,000 jobs

November 1, 2012

Danske Bank says it is responding to a recession and burst housing bubble in its home market. The bank announced job cuts, raising its target for staff eliminations by 1,000 from its previous goal of 2,000 cuts. The reduction will be found through closing bank branches and a greater reliance on automated and online services. Customers will only be able to receive personal consultation 'when it is needed'.

English: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/breaking/2012/1030/breaking26.html>
<http://cphpost.dk/business/danske-bank-cutting-another-1000-jobs>

Estonia

Strike ends as hospitals meet health workers' wage demands

November 26, 2012

Hospitals unions have ended the strike as a deal was reached on pay increases. As reported in the September and October newsletters, health care workers went on strike as the Hospitals Association failed to meet wage demands, posed by the unions to halt an exodus of health workers to better paying EU member states. The workers declined a wage offer of 3% for doctors and 6% for nurses and caregivers made on the eve of the strike and last month declined a follow-up offer of 15 % for caregivers, 10% for nurses and 6% for doctors. The pay deal that ended the strike and on the basis of which a collective agreement will be drawn up, now includes a 23% increase for caretakers, 17.5% for nurses and 11% for doctors.

English: <http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/32037/>
<http://news.err.ee/health/cb6aab5f-cb85-49b8-af73-odf0296b9d26>

Unions come up with minimum wage proposals

November 6, 2012

The Estonian Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) announced that it would make employers a proposal to set the minimum wage next year at 320 euros a month or 1.90 euros an hour. The trade union wants to conclude a collective labour agreement with the Estonian Employers' Confederation (EEC). An increase of the minimum wage should also reduce the amount of unreported wages that forms nearly 10% in Estonia.

English: http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/markets_and_companies/?doc=65537

Finland

Pay gap between permanent and temporary workers

November 23, 2012

In 2011, nearly 16 per cent of all wage and salary earners had a temporary job. Almost two thirds of fixed-term employees would like to have a permanent job but have not been able to find one. In 2011, private sector permanent employees earned €19.11 per hour on average, whereas fixed-term employees were paid an average of €15.69 per hour. The gap stood at 18%. For central government the gap was 9% and for local government 8%.

English: http://www.stat.fi/til/pra/2011/pra_2011_2012-10-19_kat_001_en.html

Slowdown in pay increase

November 1, 2012

According to Statistics Finland's Structure of Earnings statistics, in the last quarter of 2011 the average monthly earnings of all full-time wage and salary earners were €3,111 and the median earnings €2,776.

The average hourly earnings of wage and salary earners were €18.35 and the median earnings €16.17. Wage and salary earners were best paid in the central government sector where their hourly earnings were €21.65. In the private sector the average hourly earnings were €18.70 and in the local government sector €16.84. The statistical office provides also tables and figures of earnings by major occupational groups.

English: <http://www.artto.kaapeli.fi/unions/T2012/p42>
http://www.stat.fi/til/pra/2011/pra_2011_2012-10-19_tie_001_en.html

New employment figures

November 1, 2012

The Labour Force Survey, issued by Statistics Finland, indicated that nearly 187,000 Finns were jobless in September. The figure marks an increase of 0.2% (or 7,000 additional unemployed persons) from the same month in 2011. However, the total number of employed Finns this year was 10,000 higher than last year and September's figure marks a noticeable drop from the 7.3 % unemployment rate recorded in August.

English: <http://www.icenews.is/2012/11/01/unemployment-rate-increases-to-7-1-per-cent-in-finland/>

France

Clash with ArcelorMittal

November 29, 2012

ArcelorMittal is trying to reduce capacity in line with the slowdown in the European economy and to cut its \$23 billion of debt after Moody's cut its credit rating to junk. The political clash is increasing after the industry minister expressed his frustration over the company's plan to scale back one of its three major French factories and eliminate hundreds of jobs. The company wants to close two furnaces at the Florange plant, cutting 629 jobs, while continuing to operate a part of the facility that processes steel for the car industry. Currently the facility as a whole employs 2,700 people. In all, ArcelorMittal employs about 20,000 people in France.

French: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/28/business/global/labor-dispute-pits-france...>

Health care strike in defence of working conditions

November 29, 2012

Health care workers' unions have called a strike for 29 November to protest against intended flexibilisation and worse working conditions. Unions have called on the employers to return to negotiations in the parity committee and denounced the employer proposals that will affect 230,000 health care workers.

French: <http://www.cgt.fr/3-syndicats-appellent-a-la-greve.html>

Mixed response to education reform

November 6, 2012

The start of the 2013 school year will see a return to four-and-a-half days of classes in primary school, the introduction of new teacher training, the launch of e-Education, and the creation of a 'legitimate body' to write the curricula. Other announcements included: more teachers than classes, the return of schooling for the under-threes, and a reduction in the number of children having to repeat the school year. While most of these reforms were welcomed by the teachers trade unions the unions hope that the negotiating stage due to begin after the first assessment by the National Education Minister will ensure there are no partisan decisions against the interests of school teachers and the very foundation of their professionalism and commitment to public service and national education.

English: http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2341

Future of refinery uncertain

November 5, 2012

The fate of France's oldest refinery will be decided this month, marked by a one-day strike that the government and the oil industry will be anxious to prevent from escalating into a disruptive movement similar to one in 2010. The plant's 500 workers and the trade unions have invested much hope in Dubai-based NetOil, which had to submit a new offer after its first failed to convince judges of its financial and technical strengths. A new rejection would be hard to swallow for the unions, who had secured a temporary reprocessing deal with former owner Shell and returned the plant to profit.

English: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/15302721/french-refinery-fate...>

Germany

Allegation of labour violations at Deutsche Post

November 21, 2012

UNI Global Union (UNI) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) today brought a case to the German government alleging that Deutsche Post DHL (DP-DHL) has committed a series of labour violations outside of Germany which breach the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises. The trade unions concerns have been documented over a litany of labour violations. DP-DHL has adopted a deliberate strategy to limit unionisation in many countries including Turkey, Indonesia, Malawi, Vietnam, Colombia, Guatemala, Hong Kong and the USA. A commitment to human rights is central to the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises as is clear standards of conduct for industrial relations, including a respect for the right of workers to establish or join trade unions and the right to collective bargaining.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/press-area/index.cfm/pressdetail/8182...>
<http://www.respectatdhl.org/the-case-against-deutsche-post-dhl.html?lang=en>

Poverty in cities increases

November 15, 2012

A WSI-report states that 20% of the citizens living in the larger German cities can be classified as poor. The criterion for this classification is an income below 60% of the median net income (€ 848 for a single person per month). Whilst the percentage is 15.1% for the whole population, the percentage in the cities increased from 17.5% in 2005 to 19.6% in 2011. Another important shift is the incidence of poor in East and West. In East-German cities the situation slightly improves. In some West-German cities, notably Dortmund and Duisburg, there is a dramatic increase of poverty. As the percentage of people living from social benefits is decreasing, this might indicate that an important part of the population with an income below the median can be classified as 'working poor'. An English version of the report is forthcoming.

German: http://www.boeckler.de/pdf/p_wsi_report_o8_2012.pdf
<http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/soziales/wsi-studie-in-deutschlands-staedten-steigt...>

Agreement at Lufthansa

November 13, 2012

After a series of strikes (reported in the September newsletter) and an extensive mediation process, unions and management at Lufthansa have come to an agreement over wages and redundancies. Instead of the union demand of 5%, cabin crew will receive a 3.95% increase, including a rise in base pay rates; in addition, employees will get a one-off payment of €360. Lufthansa will refrain from any forced redundancies until the end of 2014. The company also agreed that any employees who move over to work for the airline's budget Germanwings subsidiary will remain Lufthansa employees.

English: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/breaking/2012/1113/breaking26.html>
<http://www.aviationpros.com/news/10828750/lufthansa-reaches-agreement-with-union>

Wave of equal pay hikes for agency workers

November 6, 2012

After the steel, metal and electronics sectors, textile and clothing industry as well as the wood and plastics sectors are now also introducing higher pay for agency workers in order to reach equal pay with direct hires. Staffing firms have reacted critically to the pay raises, warning they will lead to job losses. Many companies, however, have said they hope the wage increases will make agency work more attractive for higher educated workers.

English: <http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/content/view/full/72986>

Job cuts despite positive results

November 1, 2012

Deutsche Bank is to cut 100 more jobs than initially planned from its investment banking arm, despite the division helping raise pre-tax profits in the third quarter. The bank had already indicated in September that job cuts into several thousands were about to come at central and at decentral level. The company concluded in 2011 a framework agreement with the unions with a clause that says that there will be no forced dismissals till 2014.

English: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/oct/30/deutsche-bank-cut-jobs>

German: [http://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/stellenabbau-bei-der-deutschen-bank ...](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/stellenabbau-bei-der-deutschen-bank-...)

Greece

ILO supports unions' complaint on infringement of bargaining rights

November 17, 2012

The ILO Committee on Freedom of Association has thrown its support behind trade unions who submitted complaints about the lack of collective bargaining and consultation in the austerity measures. The ILO committee agreed that rights to association and bargaining have been bypassed and urged the government and the troika to attribute the proper role to collective bargaining.

English: [http://www.ilo.org/brussels/press/press-releases/WCMS ...](http://www.ilo.org/brussels/press/press-releases/WCMS...)

Municipalities refuse to fire 27,000 workers

November 13, 2012

Municipal governments and unions have come together against a central government demand to fire 27,000 civil servants. Municipalities have been requested to submit lists of employees who should be put on reserve duty for one year, at 75% of their current salary, and fired the year after if not deemed essential for the functioning of the municipality. The government demands 2000 civil servants to be placed on such reserve duty before the end of the year. A league of mayors and union activists, however, has set up actions and is refusing to obey.

English: [http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/greek-mayors-refuse-to-send-athens ...](http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/greek-mayors-refuse-to-send-athens...)
[http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/ w articles wsite1 1 13/11/2012 469869](http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/w_articles_wsite1_1_13/11/2012_469869)

General strike as lawmakers vote on austerity

November 9, 2012

Whilst the government narrowly won support for the budget cuts, tax hikes and labour reforms in a parliamentary vote tens of thousands of union workers gathered near parliament during a nationwide strike that halted public transport, shut schools, banks and government offices, and caused garbage to

pile up on streets. Backed by the leftist opposition, unions say the measures will hit the poor and spare the wealthy, while deepening a five-year recession that has wiped out a fifth of the country's output and driven unemployment to 25 per cent.

English: [http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/Greece+faces+second+general+strike ...](http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/Greece+faces+second+general+strike+...)
[http://www.globalresearch.ca/greek-parliament-approves-drastic-austerity-plan-amid-mass ...](http://www.globalresearch.ca/greek-parliament-approves-drastic-austerity-plan-amid-mass+...)

Hungary

Government signs fifth strategic partnership agreement this year

November 21, 2012

At the signing ceremony in the Parliament, Prime Minister Orbán assured of Hungary's unbroken support to the free trade agreement signed between the EU and Japan. He stressed that the Hungarian Suzuki plant was of particular significance for the country since after the fall of communism, it has contributed to the integration of the economy into the new world economic order. He also informed that as a result of the negotiations, Japanese investors may come to Hungary in the upcoming one or two years. The Government is committed to creating an investment-friendly environment for international companies. With such an aim, similar agreements have been signed with industrial giants like Coca-Cola, pharmaceutical firm Gedeon Richter, aluminium company Alcoa-Kofem and car manufacturer Daimler.

English: [http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/the-hungarian ...](http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/the-hungarian+...)

Hungarian: www.kormany.hu

Teachers, government talk amid strike threat

November 17, 2012

Government representatives will resume talks with a teachers' strike committee soon, Human Resources Minister Zoltán Balog said after a first round of negotiations. Teachers' unions oppose government plans to bring schools, currently administered at the local level, under central government control from January and fear the move will mean job losses, as was reported in the August newsletter. Such fears are further fuelled by proposed changes that would increase their minimum working hours. The profession, which has seen staff numbers fall three per cent this year, is also angry about a recent austerity package that postponed a promised pay rise.

English: <http://www.budapesttimes.hu/2012/11/17/teachers-govt-talk-amid-strike-threat/>

Activation in health care of the Visegrád charter

November 8, 2012

Medical unions in Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland will stage a joint protest on 20 November against their governments' health policies. The Hungarian, Czech, Polish and Slovak union leaders that signed the 'Visegrád Charta' in November 2011 called primarily for minimum salaries of junior doctors to be set at 1.5 times the national average and those of specialist doctors at three times the national average. They also called for rules for work beyond the basic 40 hours a week to be formulated according to the European Work Time Directive. In the actual call it is noted that healthcare in the Central European region, particularly Slovakia and Hungary, is plagued by low salaries, long working hours and staff shortages.

English: [http://www.budapesttimes.hu/2012/11/08/last-warning-before-docs-get-tough ...](http://www.budapesttimes.hu/2012/11/08/last-warning-before-docs-get-tough+...)

Transport strike over pay

November 8, 2012

Transport workers are preparing a strike after trade unions active at Budapest Transport Centre (BKK) stated that they are unable to reach a collective labour agreement. A tentative contract signed earlier – which among others included cashiers, traffic managers and much-hated controllers – has expired but

the parties have been unable to reach an agreement.

English: <http://www.budapesttimes.hu/2012/11/08/transport-strike-threat-over-pay/>

Iceland

New figures on employment

November 1, 2012

The Statistics Iceland office has come up with 3rd quarter figures on employment. The strengthening of the labour market during the first half of 2012, slackened somewhat during the third quarter. The unemployment rate in the capital region of Reykjavik was 5.5% and 4.1% in other regions. The average number of working hours of those who were working in the reference week was 40.8 hours, 45.2 hours for those in full-time employment and 24.1 hours for those in part-time employment.

English: <http://www.statice.is/Pages/444?NewsID=8843>

Ireland

Austerity: how history repeats itself

November 25, 2012

Marchers that want to highlight opposition to emigration forced by cuts took to the streets as part of an anti-austerity march organised by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions (DCTU), the Campaign Against Household and Water Taxes, the Communities Against Cuts Campaign and the Spectacle of Defiance and Hope group. The event attracted 15,000 demonstrators from across the country. According to DCTU chief Michael O'Reilly the gathering was just the first of many steps in the campaign against the cuts: 'The evidence is clear - you cannot cut your way out of a recession. On the contrary - with each cut in public spending and with each euro taken out of the pockets of low and average earners, we are digging ourselves further into a hole.'

English: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/1124/1224327041977.html>

Agency will respect pay and working conditions

November 9, 2012

The trade union IMPACT has sought clarification on a number of other issues related to a new agency, which is to be established in January 2013. Management has told the union that it is undertaking a census of staff who it thinks will transfer to the agency. Workers who transfer to the new Children and Family Support Agency in 2013 will retain their existing pay and conditions, including pension entitlements, without any break in service.

English: [http://www.impact.ie/12/11/09/New-children-s-agency-will-respect ...](http://www.impact.ie/12/11/09/New-children-s-agency-will-respect...)

Drop of average wage

November 8, 2012

Recent figures show that average weekly earnings fell slightly in the second quarter of 2012. In the whole year 2011 the average worker's wage fell to under €41,000— a drop of over 4.5% since 2008. The highest annual wage in 2011, excluding costs, was €50,985 and was in the financial, insurance and real estate sector. The lowest was in the accommodation and food services sector at €16,910.

English: [http://www.cso.ie/quicktables/GetQuickTables ...](http://www.cso.ie/quicktables/GetQuickTables...)
[http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/earnings/2012 ...](http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/earnings/2012...)
[http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/average-annual-salary-falls ...](http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/average-annual-salary-falls...)

Italy

Actions at Ilva Taranto continue

November 29, 2012

FIOM, the metalworking branch of the CGIL union, has organised a permanent general workers' assembly inside the Ilva factory, the largest steel corporation in Europe. Those who had finished the shift were invited to stay, while those that were supposed to start the next shift were invited to come despite the work stoppage. 5000 workers are affected by the stoppage in Taranto. However, the shutdown was also extended to workers in Ilva factories in Genoa, Novi Ligure and Marghera. In total, 7500 workers have been affected. A strike has been announced for 29 November, combined with a manifestation in Rom.

English: [http://libcom.org/blog/permanent-general-workers ...](http://libcom.org/blog/permanent-general-workers-...)

Italian: <http://www.fiomtaranto.it/> <http://www.primocanale.it/video/arresti-ilva-taranto-il-commento-della-fiom-50033.html>

Actions at San Raffaele hospital

November 11, 2012

After strikes, occupations and demonstrations, workers at the San Raffaele hospital in Milan have now blocked a major ringroad. The workers are protesting against job losses and pay cuts. The hospital is dismissing 200 employees to solve financial problems that were caused by corruption at management level.

English: <http://www.libcom.org/blog/struggle-san-raffaele-hospital-milan-11112012>

Clashes at IKEA?

November 3, 2012

Workers at an IKEA plant went on strike. Their press release listed serious issues such as wage inequality, excessive workload, unpaid wages and the firm's refusal to allow union representation.

English: <http://libcom.org/blog/all-out-strike-clashes-ikea-plant-03112012>

Latvia

New Labour Force Survey figures

November 14, 2012

Compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, the number of active population aged 15-74 years in the 3rd quarter of 2012 has increased by 1.6%. Two thirds (66.5%) of the population in this age group were economically active; this indicator comprised 71.1% among men and 62.5% among women. Almost half of the total number of unemployed persons was long-term unemployed. More information on the Labour Force Survey results is available on a separate database.

English: <http://www.csb.gov.lv/en>
<http://data.csb.gov.lv/DATABASEEN/Iedzsoc/Short ...>

Liechtenstein

Short report on employment and income

November 1, 2012

The statistical office has released a short report with figures up to the end of 2010 and data for the 2nd quarter of 2012. Unemployment went down to 2.3% in 2011. Most recent figures show a slight increase of unemployment. Since 2009 the number of workers commuting from Germany, Austria and Switzerland increased with on average 5%.

English: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-as-employment_and_income_fiz2012
http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-p_aktuelle_2012-3

Lithuania

The costs of the shadow economy

November 13, 2012

According to the data of the Lithuanian Free Market Institute, the shadow economy in 2011 accounted for 27% of GDP. And an analysis of taxes paid by residents, conducted by Swedbank's Personal Finances Institute, has suggested that, if the shadow economy was eliminated, the country could collect an additional 7.5 billion litas (€2.1 billion) from residents' taxes. Swedbank estimates that the state loses the most of tax revenue because of illegal jobs.

English: [http://www.lrinka.lt/n/index.php/menu/newsroom/press_releases ...](http://www.lrinka.lt/n/index.php/menu/newsroom/press_releases...)
<http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics/?doc=65899>

Luxembourg

Protests at Cargolux and Luxair as Qatar airways sells shares

November 19, 2012

Around 1500 people joined a protest against job losses and mid-term repudiation of the collective agreement at Cargolux and Luxair, reported in this newsletter over the last two months. The protesters gathered in front of the parliament in Luxembourg city on 13 November, demanding the government re-think its plans to sell shares to Qatari investors and speak up for workers. Only days later Qatar airways announced it is breaking up the relation with Cargolux, selling its 35% share in the business and that Cargolux chairman Albert Wildgen is to resign his position. Unions have asked the ministry for clarifications on the repercussions of the Qatari withdrawal and several other restructuring plans.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index...)
[http://www.wort.lu/en/view/cargolux-confirms-qatar-airways-split ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/cargolux-confirms-qatar-airways-split...)
[http://www.wort.lu/en/view/union-calls-for-clarity-over-cargolux-status ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/union-calls-for-clarity-over-cargolux-status...)

EU civil servants on strike

November 9, 2012

Staff at the EU institutions in Luxembourg went on strike protest against feared budget cuts that employees say would threaten the future of European integration. Cuts, advocated by the EU member states, are expected in the cohesion funds as well as in agriculture and programmes against youth unemployment. In total 5500 employees joined the strike.

English: [http://www.wort.lu/en/view/5-500-eu-civil-servants-join-strike-action ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/5-500-eu-civil-servants-join-strike-action...)
[http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxembourg-european-institution-staff-to-go-on-strike ...](http://www.wort.lu/en/view/luxembourg-european-institution-staff-to-go-on-strike...)

Malta

Former port workers protest

November 22, 2012

Around 200 former port workers held a protest walk in Valletta, calling on the prime minister to meet them by the end of the month to discuss their call for participation in the Port Workers Contingency Fund. The workers, led by the General Workers' Union, are seeking an out-of-court settlement to be given what they claim they are due. The workers had contributed to the fund which now runs into several million euros.

English: [http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20121122/local/former-port-workers ...](http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20121122/local/former-port-workers...)

Netherlands

Holland Casino cuts 450 jobs

November 28, 2012

State-owned Holland Casino has announced it will be cutting 450 of its total 4100 jobs. The redundancies, motivated by decreasing numbers of visitors, come despite the company already cutting 800 jobs in recent years. A Holland Casino spokesperson commented that the company is losing money because fewer people come to its casinos and those who come spend less. The government has already announced it will be selling Holland Casino, which operates under a monopoly position in the Dutch market.

English: [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2012/11/holland casino to cut...](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2012/11/holland_casino_to_cut...)

Abuse of foreign labour

November 7, 2012

It's believed that thousands of foreigners are being exploited by Dutch market gardens, cleaning contractors and construction companies. They're locked up, swindled and intimidated. Labour inspectors are becoming increasingly concerned because the illegal economy behind this exploitation is continuing to grow. The number of victims who have been found by the police has doubled in recent years.

English: <http://www.rnw.nl/english/video/modern-day-slavery-growing-netherlands>

ING plans 2,350 job cuts

November 7, 2012

After having published that it had made a third-quarter net profit of €609m the largest Dutch financial services group ING, which employed 94,000 people at the end of June 2012, said it was to cut 1,350 jobs at its European insurance operations and 1,000 in commercial banking, or 2.5% of its workforce. The company said the redundancies would be made over two years. So far, it is unclear where the bulk of the cuts will take place and when they will start.

English: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/nov/07/ing-cuts-bank-insurance-jobs>

Norway

Bonuses paid to keep the workforce

November 24, 2012

The German company Wintershall is offering large bonuses to grab the most Statoil employees when it assumes operatorship of the Brage field. A company spokesperson motivates the move: 'Having continuous and reliable operation at Brage is vital for us. We know there's a good working environment at Brage and would like this to continue.' A 6% wage increase for offshore employees

with statutory pay is also part of the deal.

English: [http://www.aftenbladet.no/energi/aenergy/Wintershall-pays-huge-bonuses ...](http://www.aftenbladet.no/energi/aenergy/Wintershall-pays-huge-bonuses...)

APMT dockers fight for local collective agreement

November 8, 2012

Dockers at global network terminal (GNT) operator APMT have filed an official request for a local collective agreement matching all terms and conditions of the national collective agreement for dockworkers. APMT is the only GNT operator who is not affiliated to the national employers' organisation and has refused to sign up to the national collective agreement.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index.cfm ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index.cfm...)

Poland

Woodworkers convened in Warsaw

November 6, 2012

Trade unions organising workers at Swedwood plants in Hungary, Poland, Sweden, Russia, and the United States convened in Warsaw to exchange and discuss strategies in outreaching to workers and engaging in social dialogue with their respective local Swedwood management. An important part of the meeting focused on how the other unions could effectively support the Polish union's efforts to organise the 9,000 workers at the 11 Swedwood plants in the midst of the efforts to negotiate a legally binding collective bargaining agreement. Key negotiating points for the union are wage increases, occupational safety and health, permanent unlimited employment contracts, and 30 minute breaks.

English: [http://blogs.bwint.org/mnc/2012/11/06/trade-unions-representing ...](http://blogs.bwint.org/mnc/2012/11/06/trade-unions-representing...)
[http://blogs.bwint.org/mnc/2012/11/04/bwi-holds-press-conference-to-support ...](http://blogs.bwint.org/mnc/2012/11/04/bwi-holds-press-conference-to-support...)

Portugal

General strike cripples public transport

November 14, 2012

The general strike organised in concert with the ETUC European day of action of solidarity against solidarity crippled transport throughout the country. Nearly all metros, trains, buses, ferries and half of TAP flights were cancelled. Union pickets prevented some minimal services from being upheld. Refugee collectors also joined the strike in great numbers.

English: <http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/portugal-strikes/27180>

BCP to cut more jobs

November 8, 2012

After announcing €796 million losses over the first three quarters, the Banco Commercial Português (BCP) made known that it will seek to lay off another 600 employees. A spokesperson said the bank hopes to achieve the jobs cuts through voluntary redundancies and natural attrition. Earlier this year, the BCP cut 93 jobs.

English: <http://theportugalnews.com/news/bcp-reports-big-losses-and-job-cuts/27162>

Dock workers strike extended

November 8, 2012

Dock workers extended a strike in at least four ports until 28 November as they protest against a plan to change labour rules. The strike, which began before the government approved a draft law on 20 September to make employment practices in the sector more flexible and reduce exporting costs, will continue until the government and unions reach an agreement.

English: [http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-11-07/portugal-dock-workers-extend ...](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-11-07/portugal-dock-workers-extend-...)

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Romania

IMF and EC intervene in a negative way

November 21, 2012

The ITUC has obtained a copy of a detailed not-for-publication joint EC and IMF document that pressures the Romanian government not to adopt a decree that is intended to correct measures/provisions that are inconsistent with core labour standards. The decree is intended to correct flawed provisions in the country's social dialogue law. The document, Joint Comments of European Commission and IMF Staff on the Draft Emergency Ordinance to Amend Law 62/2011 on Social Dialogue, has been reviewed by IMF headquarters personnel, who acknowledge its authenticity. The EC and IMF pressure the authorities 'to ensure that national collective labour agreements do not contain elements related to wages'. This is inconsistent with Article 4 of ILO Convention 98, which holds that governments should not enact measures to restrict the scope of negotiable issues in such labour agreements.

English: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/imf-and-ec-apply-behind-the-scenes.html?lang=en>

Tarom workers dissatisfied with new management

November 9, 2012

State owned airline Tarom workers that are unhappy with the new management and how they manage the company are being balloted to see if there is majority support for industrial action. The unions have complained that they were never consulted about the future of TAROM.

English: [http://www.romania-insider.com/tarom-workers-may-strike-over-imposition ...](http://www.romania-insider.com/tarom-workers-may-strike-over-imposition-...)
[http://www.bucharestherald.ro/dailyevents/41-dailyevents/38185-tarom-employees ...](http://www.bucharestherald.ro/dailyevents/41-dailyevents/38185-tarom-employees-...)

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Serbia

Construction workers on hunger strike

November 13, 2012

The construction workers at 'Ratko Mitrovic' (see our September Newsletter) have been blocking the entrance of the company as there have been no positive developments regarding their unpaid wages for months. Workers were hoping that their hunger strike would help make their voices heard. Workers remain unpaid since 15 march 2012. The global building workers union BWI has started a solidarity campaign.

English: <http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Index=4536&Language=EN>

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Slovakia

Teachers on strike again

November 26, 2012

After a first warning strike (see our September newsletter), teachers took to the streets again to demand higher wages. The government has offered a pay increase of 5%, but unions demand at least 10%. According to estimates, about 80% of primary schools, 90% of secondary schools and 30% of universities were closed due to the strike, which was joined by kindergarten staff. It is unclear how long the strikes will last.

English: [http://www.demotix.com/news/1634338/slovak-teachers-strike-higher-salaries ...](http://www.demotix.com/news/1634338/slovak-teachers-strike-higher-salaries...)

Mixed feelings on labour code

November 5, 2012

The revision of the Labour Code has led to a basic document that governs employee-employer relations. However, the employers and opposition MPs attacked the changes, saying they are the opposite of what Slovakia's economy, currently affected by the economic crisis and suffering from high unemployment, needs. They argue that it will increase the costs of employment and slow the creation of new jobs.

English: http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/48105/3/revamped_labour_code_gets...

Slovenia

Mass protest against budget cuts

November 17, 2012

About 30,000 people gathered in a large square in the capital Ljubljana to call for an end to the austerity program. The government, struggling to avoid a bailout, cut public sector wages by about 3% in 2012. It plans a further 5% cut in 2013 to bring the budget deficit to 3% of GDP, from 4.2% expected in 2012. The demonstrators demanded the government to create conditions that would ensure the majority of people to have jobs and live a decent life.

English: [http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/17/us-slovenia-protest ...](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/17/us-slovenia-protest...)

Spain

Health workers in Madrid region on strike

November 27, 2012

Health workers in the Madrid region have organised two days of strike and announced to more action days in the beginning of December. The health workers are protesting against plans to privatised six brand new hospitals as well as against the €1 fee for the issuing of prescription drugs. Unions report that about 80% of health workers participated in the strike; minimum services were guaranteed throughout the strike.

English: http://elpais.com/elpais/2012/11/27/inenglish/1354020373_890781.html

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

Iberia announces 4500 redundancies

November 27, 2012

Iberia has announced it will be cutting 22% of its workforce, amounting to 4500 jobs in an attempt to save the loss making company. Iberia said it will restructure to focus on fewer but profitable routes. The company set a deadline for 31 January 2013 to agree with trade unions on a social plan. The announcement of the cuts was made on the same day it became known that the airline is seeking to buy low cost carrier Vueling. Trade unions have threatened to start a six day strike just before

Christmas if the current plans go ahead.

English: http://elpais.com/elpais/2012/11/09/inenglish/1352456804_467980.html
http://elpais.com/elpais/2012/11/27/inenglish/1354029177_012016.html
Spanish: [http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/11/09/actualidad ...](http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/11/09/actualidad...)

Injuries and arrests during new general strike

November 14, 2012

Trade unions and NGOs organised a new general strike on 14 November, the European Day of Solidarity against Austerity. Violent clashes with the police took place, during which over 140 people were arrested and 74 injured. The anti-austerity protests focused on the on-going cuts in the public sector, rising unemployment and increasing home evictions.

English: <http://rt.com/news/eu-austerity-protests-655/>

Sweden

Bargaining tradition broken during SAS negotiations

November 22, 2012

SAS threatened to declare the company bankrupt unless its staff in Sweden, Denmark and Norway signed new working conditions, including pay cuts of up to 15%. The LO-trade unions see this as a clear shift away from the usually consensual 'Nordic Model' that stands for good relations between management and labour. The company says that the move was necessary to save the company. Workers representatives were informed in detail about the situation and about the conditions from the side of the banks for a new credit facility.

English: <http://www.dw.de/sas-receives-approval-from-unions-on-massive-cuts/a-16388583>
Focus on the Nordic Model: <http://www.scandinavianlaw.se/pdf/43-4.pdf>

IKEA admits forced labour

November 17, 2012

A report by auditors at Ernst & Young concluded that Ikea knowingly benefited from forced labour in the former East Germany to manufacture some of its products in the 1980s. Ikea had commissioned the report in May as a result of accusations that both political and criminal prisoners were involved in making components of Ikea furniture. According to one of the former prisoners there were many companies involved in this practice that all should be named and shamed.

English: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/17/business/global/ikea-to-report...>
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/nov/16/ikea-regrets-forced-labour-germany>

LO wants coordinated wage demands for 2013

November 11, 2012

The blue-collar workers confederation LO has called on the other unions to coordinate wage demands for 2013. The LO national unions have agreed on demands for a lump sum increase that will bring low wage workers up to the standard of the average industrial worker and on an overall demand of 2.5% for all workers already earning the average or more.

English: <http://www.lo.se/home/lo/home.nsf...>
Swedish: <http://www.kommunal.se/Kommunal/Nyheter/2012/LOs-krav-en-laglone...>

Human rights violations in tour operating sector

November 6, 2012

The network Fair Travelling (Schyst Resande) released a report made in two of the most popular destinations for Swedish tourists: Turkey and Thailand. The report reveals serious violations of international labour standards, national legislation and human rights in hotels used by three of the biggest tour operators in Sweden: Apollo (Kuoni), Fritidsresor (TUI Travel Pic) and Ving (Thomas Cook Group Pic). The violations include lack of written contracts, non-respect of working time and wage regulations, discrimination of pregnant workers, threats and union busting.

English: <http://cms.iuf.org/?q=node/2072>

Switzerland

Equal pay and minimum wage demanded

November 20, 2012

Trade union UNIA has published a history of women in watchmaking. In the slipstream women working in watchmaking met to demand real progress in terms of equal pay. They adopted a resolution demanding detailed audits of women's and men's wages in the engineering and metal working sectors, calling upon the industry to participate in the dialogue on pay equity, an instrument which aims to close the pay gap. The women are demanding access to information on pay systems, classification and promotion in order to allow corrective measures to be taken. They are also demanding training and retraining. In order to raise women's low wages, they are in favour of introducing a minimum wage in the industry.

English: <http://www.industrialunion.org/women-in-swiss-watch-making>

UBS restructuring with massive job losses

November 1, 2012

UBS came up with a heavy third quarter loss and announced plans to cut around 10,000 jobs worldwide as part of a massive restructuring. The bank has planned to reduce its workforce to 54,000 by 2015 from 64,000 employees currently. Some 2,000 cuts will come from UBS front-office workers who deal directly with clients. The news of the coming cuts revived an old joke that the name UBS stands for 'U've Been Sacked', as many said they only discovered they'd been laid off when their building security passes were deactivated.

English: [http://www.btimes.com.my/Current_News ...](http://www.btimes.com.my/Current_News...)
[http://www.latimes.com/business/money/la-fi-mo-ubs-worker-layoffs ...](http://www.latimes.com/business/money/la-fi-mo-ubs-worker-layoffs...)

Turkey

Renault Turkey has to respect labour rights

November 19, 2012

Solidarity from unions abroad was initiated after a walk-out staged by workers during a night shift at a Renault facility in the north-western province of Bursa. The workers, who accused the management of Turk Metal, the 'yellow' union entitled to collective bargaining at Renault's Bursa plant, of collaborating with the employer, staged a sit-in outside the management building and called for the leaders' resignation. Renault management in Turkey fired 23 workers following the protests. CGT Metal, one of France's trade unions active at Renault's plants, demanded the management rehire the fired workers and claimed that Turk Metal is not chosen freely by the workers.

English: [http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/144948/french-south-korean-unions-call ...](http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/144948/french-south-korean-unions-call...)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMJTQjLSZso&feature=youtu.be>

Texim textiles ceases anti-union activities

November 4, 2012

Textiles manufacturer Texim announced that it will cease its resistance against organising in its plants. Fired activists from the Textile, Knitting and Garment Industry Workers' Union (TEKSIF) will be reinstated at higher wages and receive full salaries for the four months they organized picketing lines; workers choosing not to return will receive compensation packages. As a result of its activities since 2010 TEKSIF has now organised over half of the Texim workforce and can apply to the ministry for certification that will allow them to become official partners in collective bargaining. Texim produces clothes for Hugo Boss and Pierre Cardin.

English: <http://www.industrial-union.org/victory-for-texim-workers-in-turkey>

United Kingdom

20,000 redundancies announced in one week

November 28, 2012

Unions have raised the alarm after the total redundancies announced in one November week added up to 20,000 jobs on the line. The biggest announcements came from Vion (12,500), Tata Steel (900), Premier Foods (900), charity organisation Turning Point (2,600), Comet (735), Newcastle city council (1300), and NHS cuts (1000). Meanwhile a study from the Office For National Statistics (ONS) warns for the growth of underemployment. 3.05 million workers want to work more hours each week, out of a total workforce of 29.41 million. The number of workers in this position has shot up by 980,000 in the four years since the start of the economic recession in 2008. According to the TUC the figures show how fragile the labour market is.

English: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20509189>

http://www.unitetheunion.org/news_events/latest_news/tata_job_losses...

Wage offer welcomed

November 24, 2012

The Employers' organisation COSLA has offered to increase pay by 1% for Council workers from 1 April 2013. The offer also includes a proposal to bring in a living wage of £7.50 per hour in every council in Scotland. GMB Scotland is delighted to see a living wage coming in across all Councils as this has been a long held goal for us. This will introduce the living wage to 17,000 workers in Local Government. However, after 3 years of wage restraint the union does not believe the increase of 1 % is enough to address the drop in living standards.

English: http://www.gmb.org.uk/newsroom/latest_news/gmb_scotland...

Part-time work and the pay gap

November 22, 2012

The Office for National Statistics has published its latest annual pay statistics. According to the TUC the 36% pay gap between part-time and full-time workers is the main barrier to closing the gender pay gap and tackling in-work poverty. There are currently over eight million part-time workers in the UK, nearly three-quarters of whom are female. However, the proportion of men working part-time today is at an all-time high, with the number of male part-time workers more than doubling in the last 20 years. A large number of part-time workers live in poverty, with an average wage of just £8 per hour. Two fifths of part-time workers earn less than the living wage of £7.45 an hour, while two in five part-time workers in the capital earn less than the London living wage of £8.55.

English: <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-21693-fo.cfm>

Union recognition stolen from Virgin staff

November 22, 2012

Virgin Media has been accused of 'stealing' trade union recognition from its staff following the company's result of a referendum on union recognition. Despite the company giving CWU less than a week's notice on the referendum, and bombarding staff with company messages urging them to vote for derecognition, the supposed result was a very slim 52% to 48% in favour of the company's position. According to a Virgin spokesperson the company will from now on deal with staff forums which have an inclusive voice in the company's decision-making.

English: <http://www.cwu.org/news/archive/virgin-media-steals-union-recognition.html>
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2012/nov/22/communication-workers-union-virgin-vote>

Cleaners win pay rise

November 19, 2012

Outsourced cleaners that work at four different John Lewis sites in London and are employed by cleaning contractor Integrated Cleaning Management (ICM) won a 9% pay rise as a result of an IWW campaign. The cleaners had seen their hours reduce and workload increase, while they were paid minimum wage of £6.19. The increase, backdated 5 months, takes their pay to £6.72 per hour at three central London sites, and £6.50 at one outer London site. Supervisors will now get £8.00 per hour and £7.84 respectively.

English: [http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/nov/05/living-wage ...](http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/nov/05/living-wage-...)
<http://iww.org.uk/node/821>

Unionising the British Airways mixed fleet

November 15, 2012

About half of the 1800 mixed fleet crew at British Airways joined Unite union in recent months. The mixed fleet staffs were hired after November 2010, under worse working conditions and pay than employees hired before that date. The lower entry salaries caused a fierce industrial conflict in 2010. The significantly younger mixed fleet crew is now seeking better working conditions through collective bargaining. BA has agreed on union recognition and said it is open to talks.

English: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/nov/15/ba-crews-union-pay>

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