

collective bargaining

Issue 5/2015 May

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

Working and living conditions in perspective

May 26, 2015

Eurofound, the Dublin based European agency, celebrates its 40th anniversary. The Yearbook 2014 titled *Living and working in Europe* summarises a lot of the work of the agency in the field of employment issues, workplace practices, sustainability and quality of life. The section on collective bargaining notes that, though decentralisation of collective bargaining has accelerated in the wake of the crisis, 60% of employees in

private sector establishments with 10 employees or more are still covered by a collective wage agreement made at company, regional, sectoral or occupational level (or any combination of these levels where multiple interlinked agreements might be in place). The figure rises to 70% when national cross-sector agreements (such as in Italy, Finland or Spain) are considered.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites ...>

Gap widens between rich and poor

May 21, 2015

The OECD-report *In It Together: Why Less Inequality Benefits All* documents that income inequality has reached record highs in most OECD countries and remains at even higher levels in many emerging economies. The richest 10% of the population in the OECD now earn 9.6 times the income of the poorest 10%, up from 7:1 in the 1980s and 9:1 in the 2000s. The report also shows that wealth is even more concentrated at the top than income, exacerbating the overall disadvantage of low-income households. In 2012, the bottom 40% owned only 3% of total household wealth in the 18 OECD countries with comparable data. By contrast, the top 10% controlled half of all total household wealth and the wealthiest 1% owned 18%.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/social/in-it-together-why-less-inequality-benefits-all ...>

Income distribution and wages

May 20, 2015

The European Progressive Observatory has published a policy brief that summarises facts and figures related to income distribution and wages. The main transformations initiated at the end of the 1970s have involved changes in monetary and fiscal policies and rules, and profound institutional changes in labour market regulations and the role of trade unions. The combination of the high unemployment generated by the changes in macroeconomic policies, and the institutional changes weakening collective wage bargaining and deregulating labour markets have impaired wages growth. According to mainstream economics, such changes in distribution and labour markets institutions should have led to lower unemployment. However, this has not been the case in the Eurozone, neither before nor after the crisis. There is increasing evidence that employment protection legislation has no impact on unemployment rates across countries and periods.

English: <http://www.queries-feps.eu/recent-and-long-term-trends-in-income-distribution-and-wages/>

Standard employment under pressure

May 19, 2015

The World Employment and Social Outlook of the ILO explores the inter-connected nature of macroeconomic policies on the one hand, and employment and social outcomes on the other. The report analyses which policy combinations are most effective in delivering high employment and balanced incomes. The publication reveals a shift away from the standard employment model, in which workers earn wages and salaries in a dependent employment relationship vis-à-vis their employers, have stable jobs and work full time. In advanced economies, the standard employment model is less and less dominant, whilst the proportion of value added going to wages declines over time, leading to lower wage shares and higher income inequality.

English: <http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2015-changing-nature-of-jobs ...>

Atypical contracts in aviation are dangerous

May 18, 2015

A report by the Ghent University concludes that pilots working as either freelancers or under zero-hour contracts create an unsafe situation for the flying public. The report outlines that in many situations, pilots receive little or no sick leave, making many pilots reluctant to take necessary rest. It notes how young pilots are often forced to pay up front in order to fly enough hours to maintain their licenses. Pilots receive nothing if they do not fly, even in cases of schedule changes and cancellation. Under some of the used pilot contracts, a pilot is essentially in debt to his airline and is reimbursed per flight. Worst of all is the situation of pilots entering the labour market. Social legislation is not able to tackle these problems, leaving room for artificial subcontracting chains and social as well as fiscal 'engineering'. This race to the bottom leads to a distortion of competition, erosion of workers' rights and serious question marks in the field of safety and liability.

English: https://www.eurocockpit.be/sites/default/files/report_atypical_employment_in_aviation ...
<http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/18/meps-freelance-zero-hour-airline-pilot-contracts-dangerous/>

Wage inequality and the financial crisis

May 13, 2015

A report from Eurofound reveals that the financial crisis has had a giant impact in the EU on the overall trend of wage inequality: while wage inequality had been decreasing prior to the start of the crisis, it started to rise as the crisis progressed. Between 2004 and 2008, overall wage inequality in the EU diminished. This was due to convergence between European countries, driven by a rapid catching-up by eastern Member States and a stagnation of wages in the two biggest economies – Germany and the UK. After 2008, however, wage inequality increased, mainly as a result of rising inequalities within countries. Only eastern European Member States experienced a decline in wage inequality over the whole period, while other Member States saw increasing overall inequality levels against a background of growing unemployment. In the UK, wage inequality had fallen markedly up to 2008, after which it rose even more sharply up to 2011.

English: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites ...>

Austria

Minimum wage in gastronomy and hotels goes up

May 7, 2015

The bargaining partners in hospitality have concluded a new collective agreement (for around 200000 workers in the sector). Trade union vida and the sections gastronomy and hotels of the Chamber of Commerce agreed (as from 1 May 2015) a minimum wage of 1,400 euro and an overall increase of the wages with 2.35%. The apprentices' fees will increase with 3.48%: during the first year to the amount of 625 euro, during the second 695 euro, the third 830 euro and the last year of training 910 euro.

German: <http://www.oegb.at/cms ...>

Belgium

Train strike of autonomous union

May 28, 2015

ASTB, a union representing train drivers, organised a strike on 28 May in protest at pay scales and premiums. The union is an autonomous organisation which has not been officially recognised as a trade union; it represents about one in four of the authority's 3,800 drivers. ASTB has announced that more strike action is to be expected.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english ...>

Air traffic controllers coordinate actions

May 11, 2015

Air traffic controllers' trade union ACV Transcom invited several other unions of neighbouring countries to a meeting in Brussels to discuss a possible strike in June against what it describes as 'unrealistic savings' that the Federal Government is asking the air traffic control authority Belgocontrol to make. The union is in favour of coordinated action with air traffic control unions from Germany, France, the Netherlands, Luxemburg and Switzerland. During the meeting it was decided to permanently monitor the austerity plans and to act jointly in the frame of the MARC/MOSAIC trade union coordination group.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english ...>

Bulgaria

Wage development in the period 2000-2015

May 28, 2015

The average salary in Bulgaria is 400 euro. However, the average monthly wages paid in the capital Sofia amount to 550 euro, whereas the average remuneration in the city of Vidin (Northwestern Bulgaria) is not more than 280 euro. The low wages chase people away from the poor regions that become depopulated. The average salary saw a four-fold increase over the past 15 years, which is the highest increase in all EU member states. Statistics, however, categorically show that the average hourly pay in the EU is at 23.70 euro, whereas

Bulgarian employees receive an hourly average of 3.7 euro.

English: <http://bnr.bg/en/post/100562445/average-monthly-salary-in-bulgaria-reaches-eur-400>

Tripartite council discusses minimum wage

May 26, 2015

On May 19 the Supreme Administrative Court (VAS) overturned a government decree which set the minimum wage in the country at BGN 360-380. The lawsuit was launched by the Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association (BICA), the Bulgarian Industrial Association – Union of the Bulgarian Business, and the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI). The organisations had challenged the ministerial decree on the minimum wage level in 2015, stressing that it had not undergone the mandatory coordination procedure at the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation (NCTC). On the initiative of the government the NCTC met on 26 May to discuss the minimum wage proposals.

English: [http://www.novinite.com/articles/168787/Bulgaria ...](http://www.novinite.com/articles/168787/Bulgaria...)

Croatia

Growing number of people entering poverty zone

May 20, 2015

The Annual Report on the Human Rights Situation in Croatia in 2014 reveals that the human rights situation did not improve significantly in 2014. Due to the protracted economic crisis, a growing number of people is entering a zone of absolute poverty, while the authorities and politicians are refusing to face that problem or deal with it in a systematic and constructive way.

English: [http://dalje.com/en-economy/growing-number-of-people-entering-zone-of-absolute ...](http://dalje.com/en-economy/growing-number-of-people-entering-zone-of-absolute...)

Cyprus

Redundancy talks at new Bank of Cyprus

May 26, 2015

The leader of the bank employee trade union ETYK stated that the new Bank of Cyprus (BoC) must shed at least 20% of its staff to survive. ETYK had asked for a voluntary retirement plan but the absence of a CEO made it so far impossible to proceed. Other measures, like pay cuts, would also be necessary.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2013/05/26/boc-must-shed-20-per-cent-of-staff/>

Czech Republic

Collective agreement at Czech Airlines

May 13, 2015

Negotiators have reached a deal on a new collective agreement at Czech Airlines. The agreement, whose contents remains undisclosed until approved by the company board, is supposed to moderate the effects of hefty pay cuts at the company in earlier years. Due to financial difficulties, the airline has cut wages by as much as 25%, as reported in previous newsletters.

English: [http://radio.cz/en/section/news/czech-airlines-hammers-out-new-collective-deal ...](http://radio.cz/en/section/news/czech-airlines-hammers-out-new-collective-deal...)

Staff social inclusion agency on strike

May 13, 2015

Staff of the government's social inclusion agency went on strike over the agency's autonomy and independence. The conflict started when Human Rights minister Jiri Dienstbier dismissed the agency's director and staff announced the strike after talks with led to nothing. Up to 59 of the 70 staff members signed up for the strike. The minister said in a statement that he cannot comply with the demands and that they agency cannot expect to be fully autonomous while continuing to be entirely financed from government

funds. Core of the disagreement is the staff's demands to elect their own director. The staff furthermore demands a resolution in Parliament guaranteeing the continuation of the agency's mandate and its independence. Days after the start of the strike, industrial action was temporarily suspended when Prime Minister Sobotka agreed to meet with the protesters.

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2015/05/13/agency-social-inclusion-staff-suspend-strike>
<http://praguemonitor.com/2015/05/12/most-staff-government-agency-social-inclusion-strike>
<http://praguemonitor.com/2015/05/11/social-inclusion-agency-go-strike-monday>

Denmark

Latest figures on trade union membership published

May 29, 2015

The statistical office has updated its figures on trade union membership. The total membership of the trade union confederation LO decreased in the last 5 years from 1.1 million to 845,000 members. The office provides a simple calculator that goes back till the year 2007.

English: [http://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik ...](http://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik...)

Public servants will not fly Ryanair

May 27, 2015

The mayor of Copenhagen banned all 45,000 of the city's officials from using Ryanair flights for official business. He stated that the city requires all of those who deliver services to the municipality, including those who would sell plane tickets, to offer their employees proper salaries and working conditions. These rules mean that the local government cannot enter contracts or buy goods from suppliers that do not pay proper salaries. As a consequence of this policy the city will ban on flying Ryanair. The company has asked the EU Commission to investigate what it calls 'unlawful travel bans that constitute a breach of Ryanair's freedoms'.

English: [http://www.thelocal.dk/20150527/ryanair-files-formal-complaint ...](http://www.thelocal.dk/20150527/ryanair-files-formal-complaint...)

Estonia

Reduction of envelope wages

May 29, 2015

A survey conducted by the Institute of Economic Research showed that while in 2013, the state was deprived due to the payment of 'envelope wages' of 154 million euro in tax revenue, the loss of tax revenue in 2014 because of this reason was 92.5 million euro. The causes for this reduction are the employees registry set up by the Tax and Customs Board, increase of employees' awareness and decrease of the unemployment rate. An increasing number of employers and employees consider it important to work based on official contracts.

English: [http://www.baltic-course.com/eng ...](http://www.baltic-course.com/eng...)

Employers propose to raise minimum wage

May 27, 2015

The employers' confederation has met with the country's trade union confederation and proposed an increase to the monthly minimum wage from 390 euros to 448 euro by 2017. The president of the employers' confederation explained the proposal by stating the current minimum wage is too close to the poverty line. Trade unions however announced that their proposal to the employers was to raise the national minimum wage to 488 euro a month in 2016 and to 609 euro in 2017. In the first quarter of 2015, the average monthly gross wage was 1,010 euro, according to Statistics Estonia.

English: [http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics ...](http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics...)

Finland

Government puts pressure on unions

May 29, 2015

The idea for a labour market social contract is back. Earlier in May the new prime minister presented his ideas to the labour market organisations on extending Finnish working hours and other changes to the terms of employment. Now the government has made a new proposal. If the labour market organisations do not accept the list of measures proposed by the government, extra budgetary cuts will be imposed, along with further tax levies, totalling 1.4 billion euro altogether. The conditional cuts announced by the Government include among other things an end to alternation leave, cutting the index linked increase in work related pensions to half and stopping the adult education allowance for vocational studies. Also on the list are cuts in child benefits, unemployment benefits and study grants.

English: <http://heikkijokinen.info/en/trade-union-news-from-finland ...>

Negotiations on pension age

May 25, 2015

Pension negotiations regarding public service workers concluded with a proposal to gradually increase the current retirement age of 63 years to 65. This retirement age would apply to those born from 1955 onwards. If the proposal proceeds according to plan the reforms will come into force in 2017. The retirement age would rise gradually, by three months for each year from birth up until 65 years. When the retirement age of 65 years is reached by the cohort of retirees to whom this initial three month indexation applies, the plan is to continue to adjust the future minimum retirement age to reflect exponentially longer life expectancy.

English: http://yle.fi/uutiset/proposal_public_sector_employees ...

France

35 hour week is not the problem

May 30, 2015

French health service workers have taken to the streets in recent days to protest against changes to the 35-hour working week, viewed outside France as totemic of the country's rigid employment laws. But that overlooks the fact that France's hourly production figures are higher than Britain's or Germany's. The law on the 35 hour that was introduced in 2000 was aimed at increasing employment: the thinking was that if weekly hours were reduced, companies would have to engage more staff. Economists still disagree on whether this actually happened. However, official figures show the law created 350,000 new jobs.

English: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/30/35-hour-week ...>

Union protest leads to closure of Eiffel Tower

May 22, 2015

The Eiffel Tower was closed to the public for a day as workers protested against a rise in aggressive pickpockets around the Paris landmark that attracts thousands of visitors daily. It remained shut while staff held meetings about security measures. Trade unions said that there were always pickpockets at the Eiffel Tower but now workers are really facing an organised group. They asked for a permanent police presence.

English: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/22/eiffel-tower-shuts ...>

Germany

Railway reaches deal

May 27, 2015

Workers at public railway company Deutsche Bahn organised a week-long strike, affecting 5.5 million passengers, as trade unions and Deutsche Bahn failed to reach an agreement on pay and working hours. The strike, which was announced as a two day strike and turned into a week, was the longest in the history of Deutsche Bahn and paralysed both passenger and freight services. Deutsche Bahn is conducting separate negotiations with trade union EVG, which represents most railway-related workers and professionals, and the smaller train drivers' union GDL. The GDL union agreed to begin arbitration with rail operator Deutsche Bahn. According to GDL one of the key sticking points had been solved and GDL will now be able to have its own separate agreement apart from any agreement reached by the larger union EVG. A few days later EVG stated it had agreed with the company a wage hike for all employees from July 1 of 3.5%, or at least 80 euro

more per month. From May 2016, they would receive a further 1.6% increase or at least 40 euro per month.

English: [http://www.wsj.com/articles/german-train-engineers-to-end-strike ...](http://www.wsj.com/articles/german-train-engineers-to-end-strike...)

Protests at Deutsche Post DHL receive worldwide support

May 27, 2015

Workers at Deutsche Post DHL have organised large scale protests as the company attempts to circumvent the collective agreement by moving 10,000 workers into its newly established shell company DHL delivery. Workers to be employed by DHL delivery would continue to do the same work, but earn up to €3,500 less per year. Six thousand Deutsche Post-DHL workers have put the company on trial at its annual general meeting in Frankfurt. The protesting workers were calling on shareholders of the postal and logistics giant to stop its plans to slash parcel workers' wages and take away their rights.

English: [http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2015/may/protesting-dp-dhl-workers ...](http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2015/may/protesting-dp-dhl-workers...)
<http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/deutsche-post-dhl-bring-race-bottom-home-germany>

Parliament approves collective bargaining act

May 23, 2015

The parliament passed a new act aimed at streamlining wage-bargaining and preventing small, localised industrial disputes, like the recent strikes by train drivers and pilots, from paralysing entire sectors. The act seeks to reintroduce the principle of 'one company, one wage agreement', that was abandoned after a court decision in 2010. It settles rules for competing unions within the same company and job category in the case of a wage dispute. If the competing unions cannot agree, the union with the most members will become the sole partner to negotiate with management in an industrial dispute. The underlying idea is that it will force different trade unions in one company to act together instead of campaigning against each other. The proposal will go to the senate for final approval on 12 June. Though the act could strengthen their position, some DGB unions have principle reservations; they see it as an introduction of a ban on the right to strike.

English: [http://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/strike-hit-germany ...](http://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/strike-hit-germany...)

German: <http://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/tarifeinheit-faq-101.html>

[http://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/tarifeinheitsgesetz-bundestag-schwaecht ...](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/tarifeinheitsgesetz-bundestag-schwaecht...)

Berliners unable to pay as ATMs remain unfilled

May 12, 2015

A three-week strike by Prosegur couriers has left ATMs throughout Berlin low on funds. The workers demand a pay hike of €1 per hours. Following a number of violent ATM heists, the workers are also demanding Prosegur take extra measures to ensure their safety.

English: [http://www.dw.de/courier-strike-leaves-berlins-atms-low-on-funds ...](http://www.dw.de/courier-strike-leaves-berlins-atms-low-on-funds...)

Day care centres move on to indefinite strike

May 6, 2015

Day care workers voted in favour of extending the strike reported in last month's newsletter to an indefinite strike. The day care workers are asking for higher pay in the underpaid sector. The day care teachers are placed in a relatively low pay grade, which is associated with a lower pay rate.

English: [http://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/912-indefinite-strikes ...](http://www.csee-etuice.org/en/news/archive/912-indefinite-strikes...)

Greece

ITUC criticises dismantling of workers' rights

May 27, 2015

The global trade union confederation ITUC has attacked the IMF over its hard-line stand on Greece, including its demands that the government should dismantle workers' rights. The ITUC criticised the unreasonable austerity and deregulatory reform demands. The IMF has also made demands that would intensify the dismantling of rights of workers, most of whom have already lost collective bargaining coverage, by fully liberalising collective dismissals, abolishing the law that protects trade union activities and placing new restrictions on the right to strike.

English: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/imf-should-stop-attacks ...>

Government re-hires thousands

May 7, 2015

In a change of policy the government has re-hired thousands of workers. The public sector workers were fired as a part of the austerity programmes. The new government is now making use of all of the limited flexibility in the agreements to re-hire some 4,000 school guards, cleaning ladies and civil servants. The move is expected to put the government at odds with money lenders, who have refused to pay the next tranche of loans until new reforms have been agreed upon.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe ...>

Hungary

Social workers protest low pay and working conditions

May 29, 2015

Thousands of social workers demonstrated for higher wages and better working conditions in Budapest. The average monthly wage in that sector is HUF 83,000 (275 euro). They are demanding higher wages regardless of position, the introduction of a wage scale, a 'career model', regular reconciliation and that work breaks be factored into their hours. The subject of wage increases has been removed from the government's agenda. Several trade union leaders together took to the stage to show that they cannot be divided.

English: <http://budapestbeacon.com/featured-articles/hungarian-social-workers-protest ...>

Poverty data in the period 2012-2014

May 15, 2015

After a dramatic increase between 2007 and 2012, poverty decreased over the course of 2013 and 2014 from 26 percent to 23 percent. But, during this period the likelihood of families with three or more children, people over the age of 65, and households with only one wage earner or led by a single female parent living in poverty increased significantly. The findings are collected through a household monitor, which has employed the same methodology since 1992 to research the income and employment of the population as well as the structure of its expenditures. 16.6% of the population (1.6-1.7 million people) lived in 2014 in poverty, meaning that the net income of the household did not exceed HUF 78,000 a month. In this regard, no significant improvement took place between 2012 and 2014.

English: <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/tarki-poverty-in-hungary-decreased ...>

Health care workers organise protest marches over low pay

May 12, 2015

Health care workers have organised two simultaneous protest marches against precarious pay and working conditions. Workers in the two marches, one dressed entirely in white and the other in black, say the pay is so low that they are forced to emigrate to be able to make a living. The workers are demanding a living wage, which would allow them to practice their profession in the country without falling into poverty.

English: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/12/hungary-protest ...>

Iceland

General strike perhaps averted

May 27, 2015

The general strike call that was issued in April, as reported in the April newsletter, is expected to find as many as 40% of workers responding. As currently 10,000 workers are on strike, their number is expected to grow to 70,000 by 1 June. Further short work stoppages were held on May 28 and 29 and a full strike was announced for 6 June if no agreement was reached. The Federation of General and Special Workers (SGS) and Business Iceland have been negotiating a minimum wage, which trade unions have demanded be at least ISK 300,000 (€2,032) per month. The strike covers tourism, services, fisheries, air travel, academics and

health care. The last news is that negotiators in several sectors are near to an agreement.

English: <http://www.icenews.is/2015/05/12/national-strike-action-snowballs/>
<http://grapevine.is/news/2015/05/28/worker-wage-increase-demands-might-be-met/>
<http://grapevine.is/mag/articles/2015/05/27/iceland-strikes-again/>
<http://icelandreview.com/news/2015/05/06/strikes-may-reach-70000-workers-iceland>

Ireland

Public sector pact prioritises low earners

May 30, 2015

The recently concluded Lansdowne Road agreement set outs the pay proposals for the public sector. From the start, unions and the government were in favour of giving priority in pay restoration to those earning least. The trade unions had backed flat-rate, rather than percentage increases, as these would be of greater benefit for the low paid. This has been achieved for 2016, largely by amending the application of the public service pension levy. It will result in all public service staff being better off to the tune of €1,000. In September 2017, annualised salaries for those earning less than €65,000 will also be increased by €1,000. Trade union members have to decide on the deal in forthcoming ballots.

English: [http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/low-earners-the-big-winners ...](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/low-earners-the-big-winners-...)
[http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/unions-give-pact-a-cautious-and-guarded-welcome ...](http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/unions-give-pact-a-cautious-and-guarded-welcome-...)

Dunnes' workers receive 3% wage increase, continue campaign

May 11, 2015

Workers at Dunnes Stores, who staged a strike in May, have been told they will be granted a 3% wage increase. The workers have been campaigning for better pay and working conditions. The current wage hike is the third in as many years, but unions have said it remains insufficient. Core of the contention is the Dunnes Stores' refusal to guarantee working hours, implying that workers regardless of the wage levels could earn full time wages or nothing from one week to the next.

English: [http://www.herald.ie/news/dunnes-workers-give-cautious-welcome-to-3pc-increase ...](http://www.herald.ie/news/dunnes-workers-give-cautious-welcome-to-3pc-increase-...)

New collective bargaining law receives mixed reviews

May 9, 2015

A draft law regulating collective bargaining has received mixed reviews from trade unions. The law is praised for allowing workers and their unions to present wage demands even in work places where the employer does not recognise the union. These claims will be judged by the Labour Court for recommendations and may be enforced through the Circuit Court in cases where employers refuse to comply. However, concerns were voiced that the law will promote company unions and thus effectively weaken the position of the current nationwide unions.

English: [http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/collective-bargaining-legislation-criticised ...](http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/collective-bargaining-legislation-criticised-...)
[http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/collective-bargaining-legislation-unveiled ...](http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/collective-bargaining-legislation-unveiled-...)

Health care staff rally for higher pay

May 6, 2015

Health care staff has rallied outside of the Department of Health to demand fair pay. Both frontline and support workers have accepted wage freezes for years under an agreement to save jobs. Trade unions have said that health care workers have done everything they promised under the agreement and expect the government to honour its obligations by raising the wage after the years of saving.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/siptu-health-members-rally-fair-pay>

Italy

Alitalia pilots want job security

May 25, 2015

A 24-hour strike of pilots and cabin crews at Italy's flagship carrier Alitalia hit the airline's entire network, except for operations at Bari, Brindisi and Genoa. The ANPAC union is asking for the company to confirm in writing that jobs won't be lost when a solidarity contract expires in February 2016.

English: [http://www.euronews.com/2015/05/25/thousands-of-air-passengers-grounded ...](http://www.euronews.com/2015/05/25/thousands-of-air-passengers-grounded...)

Transport strike against Jobs Act

May 15, 2015

The national public transport strike called by the independent trade union USB has had a varied impact. In Milan the prefect issued an injunction to prevent the strike in light of the need for transport infrastructure to facilitate visitors in the city for Expo 2015. In Rome the strike took place as scheduled, affecting buses, underground and trams for 24 hours with the exception of guaranteed service during commute hours from start of service until 8:30 am and from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The USB called the strike against the Jobs Act (labour reform), savage privatisations, continuous raising of the retirement age, and severe penalties due to a national contract freeze going on eight years now.

English: [http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/141965/National-transport-strike ...](http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/141965/National-transport-strike...)

Auchan workers on strike

May 7, 2015

Unions at the Italian branches of French owned retailer Auchan have called a nationwide strike. The workers are protesting against management's unilateral decision to withdraw the collective agreement and implement large scale layoffs. Unions are demanding a social dialogue, as well as a halt on the layoffs. Union representatives said the company's current financial difficulties are not the result of the crisis but of risky investment strategies that should not be passed on to the workers.

English: [http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/italian-unions-unite-call-a-national-day ...](http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/italian-unions-unite-call-a-national-day...)

Education unions organise large scale protests against abolition of social dialogue

May 4, 2015

Education unions have started organising their members in the face of a new education law, which would effectively abolish collective bargaining in the sector. A draft law, to be submitted to Parliament by the prime minister, contains proposals for longer working hours without pay rises to be implemented with social dialogue. The law would make it possible to set working conditions for teachers unilaterally, abolishing the long standing practice of collective agreements.

English: [http://www.csee-etuce.org/en/news/archive/901-italy-is-facing-a-strike ...](http://www.csee-etuce.org/en/news/archive/901-italy-is-facing-a-strike...)

Latvia

Average wage data first quarter 2015

May 28, 2015

Data compiled by the Central Statistical Bureau show that in the 1st quarter of 2015 the average monthly gross wages and salaries accounted for 785 euro. The average wages and salaries kept increasing; however, growth rate has been slowing down. In the 1st quarter of 2014 wages and salaries grew by 7.4% annually, in the 1st quarter of 2015 it increased by 6.1% or 45 euro. In the private sector the average monthly wages and salaries amounted to 773 euro, in the public sector to 809 euro, and in general government sector to 757 euros. In the private sector wages and salaries rose by 6.9% annually, and in the public sector by 5.0%.

English: [http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics ...](http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics...)

Less people below the poverty line

May 21, 2015

The Welfare Ministry reported a reduction in the number of residents registered as living below the poverty line in April 2015. The number of residents registered as living below the poverty line has reduced quite considerably since the beginning of last year, when 83,273 residents were registered as needy. In April 2015,

the number of needy residents was 3.06% of the total population, compared to 3.21% in March.

English: <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics> ...

Liechtenstein

Economic report signals slowdown

May 6, 2015

The economic perspective of the country is depending to a large extent on the exchange rate between the Swiss franc and the euro. Especially the export decreased substantially (-9% in the first quarter of 2015). By the end of 2014 employment in construction and (parts of) manufacturing reduced whilst the services sector showed a growth of jobs. Notwithstanding this the overall employment outlook is still positive, with unemployment staying stable at 2.4% of the workforce.

German: <http://www.llv.li/files/as/konjunkturbericht> ...

Lithuania

Shadow economy envisaged

May 18, 2015

The 'No Country for Shadow' initiative aims to develop a responsible, active, publicly conscious society and to canvass citizens to help reducing the scope of shadow economy in the country. It is estimated that the shadow economy has shrunk by 0.9 per cent last year. However, it is still a significant obstacle amounting to about a quarter (25 %) of the country's gross domestic product. These funds, if accounted for, could be and should be collected and used in order to improve every citizen's quality of life and overall prosperity.

English: <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/analytics> ...

Luxembourg

Social plan for care workers

May 29, 2015

Outpatient care service 'Stëftung Hëllef Doheen' announced that it would cut 90 jobs under a social plan, after government savings measures in the health care sector forced budget cuts. Cleaning staff will be let go, as well as central administration employees and staff running special activities. Two day care centres will be closed, in an operation that aims with 'all available means' to avoid the quality of services to be impacted.

English: <https://www.wort.lu/en/business/social-plan-at-care-service> ...

Cross-border workers contribute more

May 21, 2015

Analysts at the statistical office Statec examined the aspect of cross-border work from a balance of payments' point of view. They studied the social payments of the 163,912 cross-border workers registered as working in Luxembourg in 2014. In the report (available only in French) it is said that cross-border workers pour more money into the social contributions funds than they get out. While 8 billion euro leave the Grand Duchy in salaries, these workers and their employers paid 1.8 billion euro in social payments while the benefits and health treatment they received amounted to just 1.63 billion euro.

English: <https://www.wort.lu/en/business/163-912-cross-border-workers-in-2014> ...

French: <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications/regards/2015> ...

Malta

Strike at Malta Public Transport as deal falls apart

May 14, 2015

Trade union GWU ordered a strike of bus drivers after accusing the Malta Public Transport management of not abiding by the terms of a deal reached in April. A row sparked in April, as reported in last month's newsletter, when management announced it would no longer be paying salaries for hours employees were scheduled to work but during which no work was available. In a deal reached on 30 April, the company promised to pay back payroll deductions that had been made off drivers' and engineers' salaries mid-May. GWU ordered a strike, cancelling over 70 routes, after claiming the promised payments had not been made. Malta Public Transport insists it transferred the deductions.

English: [http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/52959/bus_strike ...](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/52959/bus_strike...)

Netherlands

Youth organisations call for abolishment of separate youth scales

May 29, 2015

Employer organisation AWWN Young HR and the trade union sections CNV Youth, FNV Jong and VCP Professionals have reached a so-called youth agreement on what collective bargaining agreements should look like in the future. In this agreement they state that young workers and older workers should get the same amount of off days and that wages should not be linked to age.

English: [http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/29/dutch-youth-call-for-end ...](http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/29/dutch-youth-call-for-end...)

KLM concludes cabin crew deal

May 29, 2015

The cabin crew trade unions and KLM have reached a deal on a mutually balanced package of agreements for the next 15 months. The package states that there will be no forced dismissals for economic reasons during the collective bargaining period as long as the currently used instruments, such as more or less work or part time work, remain sufficient. The work and rest time regulation has been adjusted. Trip leave of 6 days or longer will be shorter by 1 day. Cabin crew will also give up 1 vacation day in the winter. The number of vacation days in the summer for employees aged 50 years and older remains 24 consecutive days.

English: <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/29/klm-reaches-deal-with-cabin-crew-union/>

Metal workers strike

May 29, 2015

The trade unions in the metal sector have started with several strike actions after the negotiations for a new collective agreement ended without any result. The entire metallurgy industry, which includes for instance DAF Eindhoven, is involved in industrial action at the moment.

English: <http://www.eindhovennews.nl/news/29839-daf-staff-on-24-hour-strike.html>

Police workers picket line near the parliament

May 21, 2015

The police workers trade unions organised a noisy protest with sirens, horns and drums near the Binnenhof (the premises of parliament and government). The unions hope to put pressure on the cabinet and parliament to make more money available for a better collective agreement. Police officers are asking a 3% pay increase.

English: <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/21/police-line-up-in-parliament-protest/>

FNV calls for real jobs

May 1, 2015

The FNV trade union organised a march and demonstration in Amsterdam on 1 May, calling for more 'real jobs' instead of temporary contracts. The unified union that was created as the result of the merger of several trade union federations and the 'old' confederation FNV criticised employers, including the government, who are turning real work into precarious and temporary contracts. Employers consider employees on permanent contracts a risk and for them there is only one thing that counts: making profits.

English: <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/05/01/unions-employers-fight-over-permanent-contracts/>

Norway

More oil workers dismissed

May 13, 2015

Oil services group Subsea 7, which is based in Luxembourg but listed on the Oslo stock exchange, announced that it would cut close to a fifth of its workforce and sell a quarter of its fleet because of falling oil prices. The overall reduction in the global workforce would be approximately 2,500 by early 2016, down from the 13,000 reported at the end of 2014. Like many of its rivals, Subsea 7 has suffered from the slump in oil prices, which has forced many energy groups to postpone or cancel investments and projects.

English: <http://www.thelocal.no/20150513/norway-oil>

Poland

Young medical workers leave

May 22, 2015

A report by the Supreme Medical Council (NRL) signals that the number of Polish doctors who received permits to work in other EU countries rose by 25 percent in 2014. It is calculated that the average age of medical specialists is now 55, following waves of emigration over the last decade. According to the study, specialists most likely to leave their homeland are anesthesiologists, pathologists, surgeons and radiologists. Young medics are lured to other countries by more lucrative pay and better working conditions.

English: <http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul/207744,Rise-in-young-medics-leaving-Poland>

New protests at Tesco's

May 7, 2015

Workers at the Lodz Tesco store have staged new protests to speak out against union bashing. As reported in previous newsletters, the union's lead organising at the store was fired in March 2014 while attempting to negotiate collective agreement. The workers continue to stage protests to show they won't give in to union bashing strategies.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/protest-front-tesco-hypermarket-lodz-poland>

Portugal

Pensioners don't know how to make ends meet

May 28, 2015

Portuguese pensioners are among the worst-off in Europe, with the majority of pensioners earning between €250 and about €500 per month, according to figures released in 2013 by Portuguese database Pordata. While old-age poverty started to decrease in the final years of the last decade, according to a study published in 2013 by the Paris-based OECD, the organisation fears that cuts introduced to the pension system since then will lead to higher poverty rates.

English: [http://www.equaltimes.org/austerity-fallout-portugal ...](http://www.equaltimes.org/austerity-fallout-portugal...)

Lisbon bus drivers on strike

May 14, 2015

Drivers of the publicly owned bus company Carris went on strike over its planned privatisation. With nearly 80% of drivers participating in the strike and only minimum services being guaranteed, media report a mere 151 of the scheduled 491 buses were in operation. The drivers are protesting against the privatisation of the company, which is currently under way in an attempt to address the state's deficit.

English: http://www.laprensasa.com/309_america-in-english/3103284_lisbon-strike ...

TAP pilots on ten day strike

May 7, 2015

Pilots and deck crew of TAP Portugal and Portugalia went on strike from 1 to 10 May. The strike was called after the pilots' union said that the government and TAP management had broken promises that were made at the start of the ongoing process of privatisation. In 1999 and December 2014, a general agreement was signed which gave pilots the right to shares of up to 20 percent in the capital in case the airline was privatised. When the privatisation process was started in the middle of the economic crisis, however, the clause was initially ignored, prompting large scale protests reported in this newsletter. An agreement in December 2014 appeased the row, but pilots now claim that management has disrespected the guarantees from both agreements. The ten day strike action affected an estimated 300,000 passengers on 300 flights and took place in the week ahead of the deadline for investors' bids to buy a majority share in TAP.

English: <http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/tap-estimates-majority-of-flights ...>
<http://www.theportugalnews.com/news/portugal-braces-for-air-travel-chaos ...>

Romania

Dacia claims salaries being too high

May 7, 2015

Car manufacturer Dacia, owned by French manufacturer Renault, has said it will have to moderate wages, shed jobs and increase automation in order to remain competitive. The car manufacturer, which recently opened a factory in Egypt, said that Romanian wages are too high, ignoring that labour costs are amongst the lowest in the EU. Dacia has been one of Renault's bestselling brands, driving much of the company's growth in recent years.

English: <http://uatoday.tv/business/romania-s-dacia-to-shed-jobs-to-increase-competitiveness ...>

Labour costs second lowest in the EU

May 5, 2015

Romania has the second lowest labour costs in the European Union. A recent report by the German Federal Statistics Office concludes that Romania's labour costs of €4.8 per hour are trumped only by Bulgaria's €3.8. Romania's labour costs are low both because of low wages, low social security contributions and low taxes. The average hourly labour cost in the EU is €24.40.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/romania-has-second-lowest-labour-costs-in-the-eu ...>

Serbia

Privatisation could end up in bankruptcy

May 21, 2015

In an ongoing privatisation process a total of 526 enterprises with about 92,000 employees remained to be privatised and 50 enterprises alone have total debts of around 4 billion euro, with the government claiming half of them. A total of 189 firms have already gone into bankruptcy, 24 of which are water management enterprises that will be merged with the public enterprises, 23 being veterinary stations that will be managed by local governments, and 72 media firms whose privatisation will also be completed by 1 July.

English: <http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business ...>

Slovakia

Mayor, councillors Bratislava borough Vrakuna issue strike threat

May 14, 2015

The mayor and councillors of Bratislava borough Vrakuna have threatened to go on strike unless the

ecological hazards are addressed. On the outskirts of the town lies the waste dump of the former Juraj Dimitrov Chemical Plant (CHZJD), which has been suspected to pose significant health and environmental risks. A report on the waste dump is expected to be released soon. The report will outline the extent of the danger as well as those responsible for cleaning it up. The borough's mayor and councillors have now said they will expect immediate action and are prepared to go on strike if the government delays the process.

English: [http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20057334/workers-for-bratislava-borough-vrakuna-announce ...](http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20057334/workers-for-bratislava-borough-vrakuna-announce...)

Slovenia

Unions launch legislative proposal to raise minimum wage

May 14, 2015

Trade unions have started an initiative to raise the minimum wage. Choosing the parliamentary road, the union have initiated a legislative procedure to force a minimum wage hike. Unions have argued for a long time that the minimum wage is too low, but have not enjoyed any successes with traditional organising and negotiation methods.

English: <https://english.sta.si/2135035/unions-file-minimum-wage-initiative>

OECD sticks to plea for more reform

May 4, 2015

An OECD-analysis of the economic performance shows that the country experienced robust growth after independence and incomes increased steadily towards the EU average. This was facilitated by a skilled labour force and modern industrial relations. However, the crisis led to a drop in output that was one of the largest in the OECD and recovery has been slow. Interestingly income inequality is still one of the lowest in the OECD. The survey lists the reforms that have been introduced. The OECD-diagnosis and the recipes can be questioned: 'These reforms will - if fully implemented - have a positive impact on growth. The labour market reforms, changes to the product market regulation and effects of pension reform on employment should boost GDP by 1% in five years and 2% in ten years compared to the baseline projection'.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/Slovenia-2015-overview.pdf>

Spain

Ryanair ground workers strike

May 31, 2015

Ryanair's ground handling workers have called an indefinite strike at the Madrid-Barajas Airport in protest at the working conditions, abuse and threats to which they are subjected by the airline management. The strike is endorsed by the unions, which say that the company intends to cut handlers salaries by between 20% and 30% despite there being no collective agreement. The unions also say that, despite the declaration of a 66% increase in profits announced recently, the company is refusing to negotiate on the matter, either with the works council or with the union executive. They say that the conditions that are being affected include a salary reduction as well as changes to shift patterns, holidays and leave.

English: [http://www.theleader.info/article/47441/spain/national/ryanair-ground-workers-strike ...](http://www.theleader.info/article/47441/spain/national/ryanair-ground-workers-strike...)

Wage pact signed, doubts remain

May 15, 2015

Trade unions and employer organisations have settled a wage pact foreseeing a 1% pay increase in 2015 and 1.5% in 2016. The wage pact, which was signed by all parties on the national level, serves as a recommendation to the negotiators in the different sectors. While national level representatives agreed on these levels, they are not obligatory. While the recommendation usually sets the pace for collective agreement negotiations in the country, both employers and trade unions have expressed doubts that this will be the case in 2015, with trade unions calling on employers to honour the agreement.

Spanish: [http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2015/05/11/actualidad ...](http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2015/05/11/actualidad...)

Court rules soccer players may not go on strike during season

May 14, 2015

A strike called by the football players union AFE was suspended by court order, allowing the last matches that will decide the outcome of this season's primera division to go ahead. The strike was called as the government, football league, football federation and players union are fighting out a battle over television rights. Television rights are currently sold individually by the clubs, resulting in the bulk of the money going to Real Madrid and FC Barcelona. A new law, approved by the lower house, will implement a system under which the rights are sold collectively and then distributed across the league, federation and clubs in the primera and segunda division. Players union AFE called a strike after being excluded from negotiations, as well as arguing that smaller clubs and their players will not receive a fair share. The strike, which would have cancelled the upcoming matches Barcelona-Atletico and Real Madrid-Espanyol, was banned by court order after the Football League filed a law suit. The court argued that the strike could not be held during the season, because it would impede the clubs' ability to comply with its obligations in European football.

English: [http://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/sport/national/12951499.Spanish_football ...](http://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/sport/national/12951499.Spanish_football_...)

[http://sports.yahoo.com/news/spanish-court-set-rule-league-strike ...](http://sports.yahoo.com/news/spanish-court-set-rule-league-strike...)

Postal workers on strike to defend right to collective bargaining

May 5, 2015

Postal workers, employed by the publicly owned Correos service, staged a strike on 4 May to defend their right to collective bargaining. Trade unions CCOO and UGT have been attempting to enter collective agreement negotiations for months, but found progress impeded by government and Correos representatives. Since the start of the economic crisis, Correos has frozen wages and eliminated over 15,000 jobs. In a large scale protest, 85% of Correos staff, equalling tens of thousands of workers, turned out for the strike. The workers are demanding real collective bargaining, a pay rise and an end to the layoffs.

English: [http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/spanish-postal-unions-strike ...](http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/spanish-postal-unions-strike...)

New jobs are insecure and uncertain

May 4, 2015

Figures released by the Ministry of Employment show that the majority of jobs that have been created in recent years are low-skilled and short-term. The most common job found in the first quarter of 2015 was agricultural labouring work, with over half a million people finding employment in this low-skilled, insecure sector. The next most commonly found jobs were in the service industry as waiters and cleaners. A quarter of jobs lasted for a period of just seven days, many of these in the hotel industry, adding to the insecure nature of the newly created posts. Only 6.7% of contracts, created in the first quarter of 2015, were permanent.

English: <http://www.thelocal.es/jobs/article/truth-behind-spanish-job-figures>

Sweden

The deconstruction of the Swedish social model

May 12, 2015

Even among its critics, the Swedish model was often regarded as a successful synthesis between capitalism and socialism, between free enterprise and social planning. Most observers agree that the following characteristics could be attributed to it: a relatively decommodified wage relation (independent from market forces), public commitment to full employment, welfare state universalism, a large social service sector, egalitarianism (in particular with regards to women) and a class compromise between capital, labour and farmers (and later also white collar workers). However, the country has embraced the free market ideology and the financialisation has become highly visible; the wage negotiation process, based on consensus and solidarity, has been replaced by a system based upon decentralised bargaining and private mediation.

English: [http://column.global-labour-university.org/2015/05/the-swedish-model-in-2015 ...](http://column.global-labour-university.org/2015/05/the-swedish-model-in-2015...)

Switzerland

Care workers demand sector wide collective agreement

May 12, 2015

Health care workers have published a manifesto demanding a sector-wide collective agreement. The workers say the care sector is expanding, but also become increasingly impersonal. While services delivered are deteriorating, executives in some firms are making profits. The workers want to undercut competition on working conditions by a sector-wide collective agreement.

English: [http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/swiss-care-union-unia-launches-manifesto ...](http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/swiss-care-union-unia-launches-manifesto...)

Turkey

Pay deal makes an end to standstill in manufacturing

May 27, 2015

After a single Renault factory went on strike on 14 May, the car manufacturing industry in the city of Bursa woke up to a sector-wide strike. The 5,000 Renault workers went on strike over low pay and were joined by colleagues from Fiat and domestic manufacturer Çöskünöz Holding. The protests were a response to a 60% wage hike in other factories, with those in Bursa being left out. Production in Bursa resumed after a deal was struck with the auto-maker. The management of the factory had sent an internal memo to workers saying none of the employment contracts of the workers will be terminated and the claim delivered to the prosecution would be withdrawn. Furthermore, a total of TL 1,000 (\$375.86) will be paid to all workers within one week and also a TL 600 bonus will be paid each month until the end of 2015 in addition to TL 480 that will be deposited in the workers' accounts.

English: [http://www.dailysabah.com/automotive/2015/05/27/turkey-renault-workers-end ...](http://www.dailysabah.com/automotive/2015/05/27/turkey-renault-workers-end...)

May day protests end violently again

May 1, 2015

Traditional May Day protests have ended in hundreds of arrests as demonstrators clashed with police. The demonstrators were marching on Taksim Square, the traditional destination of rallies which was banned by Prime Minister Erdogan in legislation passed in previous years. As the demonstrators ignored the ban in defence of workers' rights they were met by police with tear gas and water cannons. At least 140 people were detained.

English: [http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-01/turkish-police-fire-tear-gas-on-hundreds ...](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-01/turkish-police-fire-tear-gas-on-hundreds...)

United Kingdom

Steelworkers back national strike

May 29, 2015

Steel workers have voted almost 9-1 to strike in a row over pensions, threatening the first national walkout for more than 30 years. Members of the trade unions Community, GMB, UCATT and Unite at Tata Steel backed strike action – with percentages well above planned new Government thresholds. Unions are protesting over changes to the British Steel Pension Scheme which they claim could see workers retiring at 65 instead of 60. The company and the trade unions have had a number of meetings to discuss the preliminary actuarial valuation of the British Steel Pension Scheme as at 31 March 2014, but were unable to come to an agreement.

English: [http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/steel-workers-back-first-national ...](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/steel-workers-back-first-national...)

Government announces tougher strike laws

May 27, 2015

The Queen's Speech is used by the government to set out the laws it hopes to get approved by Parliament in the year ahead. Among the many proposals in this year's speech are plans to toughen up trade union strike laws. Reforming strike laws is called a government priority. Among the envisaged changes of the strike rules are a 50% turnout threshold for ballots on industrial action, the removal of restrictions on using temporary workers to cover for striking staff and the prevention of intimidation of non-striking workers. Observers have noted that

the draft legislation, unveiled in the Queen's speech, could make strikes significantly harder to organise.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business ...>

Rail strike suspended

May 21, 2015

After four days of talks at conciliation service Acas between trade union RMT and Network Rail management, the company has tabled a revised offer. The RMT Executive Committee has considered this offer and decided to suspend all industrial action which was scheduled to take place on 25 and 26 May. Earlier on the members of the trade unions RMT and TSSA balloted in favour of a walk out on 25 May in the first UK-wide rail strike in 20 years. Members also voted for a 48-hour ban on overtime. The unions had rejected a four-year deal, with a £500 lump sum per worker in 2015, followed by three years of increases matching inflation, as well as a commitment to no compulsory redundancies until December 2016. The new offer from Network Rail is believed to be a two-year deal, with an absolute pay rise for all members both years, and a pledge of no compulsory redundancies.

English: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/may/21/rail-unions-call-off ...>

Living wage for cleaners

May 18, 2015

Trade union Unite at many workplaces is increasingly using wage negotiations to persuade employers to ensure that no-one they employ earns below the established Living Wage (LW) rates of £9.15 per hour in London and £7.85 in the rest of the country. The persistence of Unite reps that wants all workers to be paid at least the Living Wage, which is the minimum income a worker needs to ensure their basic needs are met, has paid off for five cleaners in Doncaster where four sites, including pet food operators SARVAL, operate as part of the much larger SARIA group that has plants right across the world.

English: <http://unitelive.org/living-wage-win-for-saria-cleaners/>

Strike at television broadcaster ITV

May 15, 2015

Workers at public television broadcaster ITV have staged a 24 hour strike. The workers have rejected the company's 2% wage offer, which they have said is out of line with the 39% after-taxes profit that ITV made in 2014. Trade unionists furthermore said the wage offer falls behind the increased costs of living and is unacceptably meagre in the face of large bonuses being paid out to management.

English: <http://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2015/05/15/uk-itv-journalists-on-strike-for-fair ...>

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