

Should you not be able to view this newsletter correctly, please [click here](#).

Collective bargaining newsletter main page: [click here](#).

collective bargaining

Issue 10/2015 | October

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



AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LABOUR STUDIES
UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



etui.

contents

.....
.....

European sources

Report on social inclusion

Risk of poverty documented

ILO pleads for level playing field in road transport

Massive protests against TTIP

OECD publishes report on well-being

Trends in collective bargaining

.....
.....

Austria

Trade union critical about Eurowings practices

Wage statistics for the first half of 2015

.....
.....

Belgium

Anti-austerity rail workers' strike paralyses transport

Social partners agree on pension schemes

Poverty makes sick

.....
.....

Bulgaria

Trade union cooperation crosses borders

Taxi drivers win victory over Uber

.....
.....

Croatia

Teachers' strike ends without result

.....
.....

Cyprus

Taxi drivers on strike for better regulation

.....
.....

Czech Republic

Teachers' wages lack behind

No reason against raising wages says President

.....
.....

Denmark

Increasing income inequality

Report published on unemployment benefits

.....
.....

Estonia

Worker sacked after plea for improved working conditions

Minimum wage deal reached

.....

.....

Finland

Steel company SSAB starts restructuring talks

Publisher cuts jobs – negotiations ongoing

Negotiations continue as government insists on reduction in unit labour costs

.....

.....

France

Pay deal leads to end of dispute in sugar group

Air France talks clash after lay-offs are announced

Paris garbage collectors' strike ends in pay deal

Prosegur strike enters third week

Social economic committee advises on posting

.....

.....

Germany

Hourly minimum wages tend to go beyond 10 euro

Bargaining in 2016 for 12 million workers

Real renounces collective agreement, workers rally

.....

.....

Greece

Dockworkers strike

Press and food workers demand accrued wages

The future of collective bargaining

.....
.....

Hungary

OECD reports on life quality

Retail leads pressure on private sector employers to realise wage growth

.....
.....

Iceland

Series of public sector strikes

.....
.....

Ireland

Massive rail strike brings no results yet

Postal strike suspended - negotiators come to an agreement

Lidl to pay living wage

Minimum wage in cleaning sector increases after pay deal

.....
.....

Italy

Unions mobilise for renewal of public agreement

Contractual wages and earnings

Negotiators in chemical sector sign a deal

Pension plans put on ice

.....
.....

Latvia

Care workers rally for higher quality

Teachers unions warn of impending pay cut if reform goes ahead

.....
.....

Liechtenstein

Employment report 2014

.....
.....

Lithuania

Dreaded liberalisation of labour code appears set to clear Parliament

.....
.....

Luxembourg

Wage trend stays very moderate

Labour and social cohesion - risk of poverty remains high

.....
.....

Malta

Court declares bus strike illegal

Immigration officers to take industrial action

.....
.....

Netherlands

Retailer agrees to end reduced youth wage scales

Ambulance workers on strike

Public transport strikes in Amsterdam and Utrecht

SMEs in metal have a new collective agreement

.....

.....

Norway

Transfer of jobs to low-cost states considered

.....
.....

Poland

Teachers protest for better wages and working conditions

Union survey finds truck drivers' rest conditions appalling

Taxi drivers protest against illegal competition

.....
.....

Portugal

Material deprivation reported

Aldi closes stores, lay-offs expected

.....
.....

Romania

Parliament discussing employer subsidies to hire young workers

SITT organising the IT sector

.....
.....

Serbia

Labour market in 2014

.....
.....

Slovakia

Overview of sectoral wage development

Minimum wage to increase to €405

Slovenia

Detailed report on wages and paid employment

Spain

Train drivers strike in a row

Report documents growth of poverty

Court rejects labour demands against Coca Cola bottler

Sweden

Control working conditions posted workers has to improve

Roboting, wage growth and skilled jobs

Six-hour working day gaining momentum

Switzerland

Cross-border work in Ticino region analysed

Restructuring at Credit Suisse leads to massive job losses

Turkey

Mulberry supplier workers reach deal on unionising

Dismay and protest after attack on peace union march

United Kingdom

Trade union against supply policy of teachers

Compliance report only ‘tip of the iceberg’

Living wage debated

Lidl will also pay Northern Ireland workers living wages

Deal at national gallery

.....
.....

European sources

Report on social inclusion

October 26, 2015

The Bertelsmann Foundation and the London School of Economics published the results of their SIM Europe Reform Barometer online survey in the pilot study ‘Social Policy Reforms in the EU: A Cross-national Comparison’. The study reveals that there is a clear mismatch between problem awareness and problem response in a number of EU member states. Notably southern countries did not, or have not been able to, pursue reforms to make their societies more socially inclusive. By contrast, some northern member states have legislated acts that managed to stabilise or even increase their level of social inclusion in recent years. The authors also found some evidence that a remarkable shift is taking place in European labour markets, which may well herald a more Anglo-Saxon orientation of the labour market, away from the collectivism that has characterised European labour markets after the second World War.

English: https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/...

Risk of poverty documented

October 20, 2015

The Bertelsmann Foundation conducts an annual study of developments in opportunities for social participation in all 28 EU member states. The applied monitor looks at 6 dimensions (poverty prevention, equitable education, labour market access, social cohesion and non-discrimination, health, intergenerational justice). The authors resume in the report ‘Social Justice in the EU - Index Report 2015’ that nearly one-quarter of EU citizens (24.6%) are currently regarded as being at-risk-of poverty or social exclusion – an extremely high and worrisome value. Measured against today’s total EU population, this corresponds to approximately 122 million people. Despite economic recovery, the gap between young and old is growing and the social divide between northern and southern Europe remains immense.

English: <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/...>

ILO pleads for level playing field in road transport

October 16, 2015

Following submissions by concerned employer and trade union organisations the ILO (International Labour Organisation) has agreed two far-reaching resolutions – one for action on road safety and one on transport network companies such as Uber. The resolution on transport network companies (TNCs) backs the use of new technology that complies with laws and regulations and stresses the need for all providers to work from a ‘level playing field’ under which safety and working conditions are regulated for the good of all. It also acknowledges the need for decisions taken by competent authorities or the judiciary in relation to ride-sharing-for-reward transport platforms to be enforced. The other resolution is on safe road transport.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/press-releases/2015/october/...>

Massive protests against TTIP

October 14, 2015

A broad coalition of civil society organisations, including trade unions, has organised massive protests mobilised against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. In Berlin more than 250,000 people protested, making it the biggest manifestation the country has seen in decades. The opponents argue that the deals give too much power to multinational companies at the expense of consumers and workers. Supporters of the deal, which lowers trade barriers, say it would boost economies and create jobs.

English: <http://nupge.ca/content/12561/canadians-participate-massive-rally...>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/i-didn-t-think-ttip-could-get-any-scarier...>

OECD publishes report on well-being

October 13, 2015

The OECD-report ‘How’s Life?’ describes the essential ingredients that shape people’s well-being in OECD and partner countries. It includes a wide variety of statistics, capturing both material well-being (such as income, jobs and housing) and the broader quality of people’s lives (such as their health, education, work-life balance, environment, social connections, civic engagement, subjective well-being and safety). The report shows that children are paying a high price for today’s growing inequality. Income poverty affects one child in seven in OECD countries, while 10% of children live in jobless households. Since the economic crisis, child poverty rates have risen in two thirds of OECD countries. In most OECD countries, the poverty rate for children is higher than for the population in general. The report also reveals that countries experiencing the most severe declines in household income since 2009 (such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy) continue to feel the pain, ranging from high joblessness and reduced earnings, to less affordable housing.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/statistics/how-s-life-23089679.htm>

Trends in collective bargaining

October 9, 2015

The International Labour Organisation published an Issue Brief (No. 1) that contains an assessment of the differences in collective bargaining coverage for 75 countries. The authors note that collective bargaining has come under pressure in many countries since the financial crisis of 2008. This followed a longer-term decline in union membership rates. Countries in which collective bargaining coverage remained stable or increased are those that supported inclusive collective bargaining through a range of policy measures. Included are facts and figures on coverage rates, as a proportion of employees and total employment, related to gender, to the dominant bargaining level and to union density.

English: <http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/...>

Austria

Trade union critical about Eurowings practices

October 16, 2015

Trade union Vida is examining very critically the development at Lufthansa and its cheap carriers. The reason is that the crew of some Vienna based Eurowings airplanes, against earlier promises by the management, will be no longer engaged under Austrian wages and working conditions. One of the key points is the fact that a large part of the cabin crew is contracted in temporary engagements. The union's demand is a clear commitment to binding agreements with decent working conditions.

German: http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20151016_OTS0159/lufthansa...

http://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06_0.a/1342559895236/home/unterwanderung...

Wage statistics for the first half of 2015

October 5, 2015

According to calculations by Statistics Austria, average wage and salaries increased by 2.6% for employees of trade enterprises and by 2.2% for employees in services enterprises in the first half of 2015. The number of persons employed declined by 0.2% in trade but rose by 1.0% in services. Average hours worked by employee decreased by 0.3% in trade and by 1.7% in services, compared to the same period in the year 2014.

English: http://www.statistik.at/web_en/press/104771.html

German: http://www.statistik.at/web_de/presse/104770.html

.....

.....

Belgium

Anti-austerity rail workers' strike paralyzes transport

October 19, 2015

Rail workers went on strike on 9 October to protest against austerity cuts. Ten days later a similar day of action by the socialist rail union ACOD/CGSP caused disruption to a number of train services in the Liège, Luxembourg and Namur provinces and part of Walloon Brabant. International train services were affected as well, as Eurostar trains went no further than Lille and Thalys routes were cancelled. The aim is to make rail passengers aware of their grievances about the Federal Transport Minister plans for the railways.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News/1.2472752>
<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/business/europe/2015/10/10/447977/International...>

Social partners agree on pension schemes

October 15, 2015

Trade unions and employer organisations have reached an agreement in the so-called 'Group of Ten' on the difficult question of workplace pension schemes and a number of other pending issues. If the deal is implemented the guaranteed minimum interest for workplace pensions will fall to 1.75% (from an actual the minimum rate of 3.25% for employee and 3.75% for employer contributions). However, this figure could increase depending on the long-term interest rate. A maximum figure of 3.75% has been set.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/Economy/1.2469377>

Poverty makes sick

October 13, 2015

According to a report of the Christian social security institution there is a direct link between sickness and poverty. People that live in poverty have a sickness risk that is 21% higher than those living in wealth. Based on several statistics and social stratification data the organisation calculated the risks and found that the lower the socio-economic position of a person the poorer his or her health situation and the lower his or her life expectation.

English: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/Health%2Band%2BEnvironment...>
Data set (in Dutch): https://www.cm.be/binaries/gezondheidskloof_tcm375-162534.pdf
Data set (in French): http://www.mc.be/binaries/2015-10-12-%20annexes_tcm377-162608.pdf

Bulgaria

Trade union cooperation crosses borders

October 24, 2015

The Confederation of the Independent Trade Unions (CITUB) will join an initiative of the UK's Communication Workers Union to provide humanitarian aid to refugees in Turkey ahead of the coming winter. A convoy of Royal Mail trucks will set out on a 3,000-kilometer long journey across Europe from Birmingham to Istanbul. The convoy is part of the humanitarian aid projects of CWU: www.cwuha.org

English: <http://www.novinite.com/articles/171475/Bulgarian+Trade+Union+to+Join+UK...>

Taxi drivers win victory over Uber

October 6, 2015

Parliament accepted a new law making it obligatory for taxi drivers to have certificates proving they have an employment contract with the firm they drive for. Critics have said the law is meant to keep out Uber drivers, who are not employed by the company. However, proponents said Uber is already illegal, because they drive cars that are not registered as taxis. Taxi drivers have welcomed the stricter regulation, saying it will address malpractice in sector.

English: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=171183

Croatia

Teachers' strike ends without result

October 2, 2015

Teachers at schools and universities have gone back to work, despite none of their demands having been met by the government. Teachers in primary schools, secondary education and universities went on strike demanding higher pay. High school teachers held out for one week, with primary schools and universities ending actions a few days before that. The strike did not achieve its goal, which one trade union leader said was because of ill timing. The unions have announced to re-table their demands in thirty days, but refuse to speculate on the possibility of another strike.

English: <http://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/1044-strike-in-schools-and-universities...>

.....

Cyprus

Taxi drivers on strike for better regulation

October 15, 2015

Taxi drivers in Nicosia announced a four-hour strike on 20 October. The drivers are calling on the government to address the problem workers in the sector are facing. The list of demands includes the creation of new parking spaces, lower fees for licenses and more inspection to combat competition from unlicensed cab drivers, who are driving down prices. The taxi drivers said that unless a serious dialogue is opened, another 11-hour strike would follow on 3 November.

English: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2015/10/15/taxi-drivers-to-go-on-strike/>

.....

.....

Czech Republic

Teachers' wages lack behind

October 27, 2015

The wages of elementary and secondary schoolteachers exceeded the country's average wage in all regions except for Prague in 2014, but they stood deep below the average wage of civil servants with university education. The average gross monthly pay of elementary and secondary school teachers was 28,027 and 28,890 crowns last year (respectively 1035 and 1067 euro), according to data released by the ministries of education and labour. The average gross monthly wage of all employees was 25,686 crowns (948 euro) in 2014. Although the majority of teachers are university graduates, their average wage lagged far behind the average wage of university graduates among civil servants, which was 34,613 crowns (1278 euro). In Prague, teachers' wages even lag behind the average wage of all employees (33,347 crowns or 1231 euro).

English: <http://praguemonitor.com/2015/10/27/teachers-wages-below-university...>

No reason against raising wages says President

October 15, 2015

There is no reason not to raise wages when the economy is growing by 4 percent and some companies' profit reaches 15 percent of profitability, but people themselves have to enforce wage hikes via trade unions, President Miloš Zeman said during an official visit to the Zlín region. According to Zeman, wages make up only 7 to 8 percent of total costs of companies in the country, and only 17 percent of employees are members of trade unions.

English: <http://www.praguepost.com/czech-news/50234-wednesday-new-briefing...>

Denmark

Increasing income inequality

October 21, 2015

The Economic Council of the Labour Movement (Arbejderbevægelsens Erhvervsråd – ECLM) has released a report showing that income inequality has been increasing since the mid-1980s and really took off after 2003. According to ECLM, the richest ten percent of Danes saw their incomes rise by 30 percent between 2003 and 2013 while the poorest ten percent saw their actual wages fall over the same period. Since 1985, only the wealthiest 20 percent of Danes have seen their disposable incomes increase, while all other groups have experienced a financial setback.

English: <http://www.thelocal.dk/20151021/bernie-sanders-will-not-like-this-report...>

The report (in Danish): <http://www.ae.dk/sites/www.ae.dk/files/dokumenter/analyse/...>

Report published on unemployment benefits

October 19, 2015

A report on how to improve the unemployment benefit system was released with recommendations to make it easier to earn additional time on the benefit – but thousands of Danes still risk losing it altogether. The unemployment benefit known as ‘dagpenge’ (literally ‘day money’) is a voluntary unemployment benefit administered via state-subsidised private organisations (the ‘a-kasser’). The benefit pays a maximum of 17,918 kroner (2,402 euro) per month. A commission established in June 2014 by the previous government was set to release its long-awaited recommendations, which if implemented would make it easier for the unemployed to earn the right to extended time on the benefit.

English: <http://www.thelocal.dk/20151019/new-overhaul-of-denmarks-unemployment...>

Danish site of the Commission (also with English studies): <http://bm.dk/dagpenge...>

Estonia

Worker sacked after plea for improved working conditions

October 21, 2015

Transiidikeskus AS, a stevedoring services company based around the port of Tallinn, has

dismissed a union representative of the Estonian Independent Seamen's Union (EISU). His dismissal happened after he spoke out in a picket line speech about poor working conditions and anti-union discrimination by the employer. An online appeal has been launched calling for the reinstatement.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2015/october/labourstart...>

Minimum wage deal reached

October 14, 2015

After mediated negotiations, trade unions and the employers' confederation have reached an agreement to raise the minimum wage to €430 in 2016 and €470 in 2017. As reported in last month's newsletter, social partners failed to reach an agreement and a public conciliator proposed to raise the minimum wage to €440 by 2016 and €460 the year after. Employers rejected the offer, but have now accepted a slight smaller increase in 2016, compensated by a higher increase in 2017.

English: <http://news.err.ee/v/economy/...>

.....
.....

Finland

Steel company SSAB starts restructuring talks

October 22, 2015

The Swedish steel conglomerate SSAB announced restructuring plans that could result in the loss of up to 295 jobs. The corporate shake up will affect workers at the company's steel plant in Raahen and its building subsidiary Ruukki Construction. The company has launched restructuring talks that will affect some 2,900 workers in Finland - 2,445 of them work at the Raahen plant. The talks will last at least six weeks and the planned personnel reductions should be finalised during the first half of 2016. The company aims to implement some of the payroll cuts by reducing the number of fixed term job contracts as well as through natural turnover.

English: http://yle.fi/uutiset/swedish_steelmaker_ssab_posts_q3_loss_plans_to_cut...

Publisher cuts jobs – negotiations ongoing

October 19, 2015

Sanoma Corporation, a leading media group in the Nordics, announced that that 241 people would be losing their jobs at the company. About 200 of those losing their jobs are based in Finland. The company said the move was part of a 50 million euro cost saving initiative. Meetings with affected employees have started. Sanoma is actively supporting the affected employees through an extensive change package that includes training and help with re-employment.

English: http://yle.fi/uutiset/sanoma_to_slash_241_jobs/...

Negotiations continue as government insists on reduction in unit labour costs

October 1, 2015

After large-scale protests reported in last month's newsletter, the government and social partners are back to the table over revised legislative proposals. Originally, the government had proposed legislative changes, which would reduce the length of annual leave, making the first day of sick leave unpaid and cut two bank holidays, Sunday and overtime pay. Mass protests and trade unions demonstrating that cutting Sunday and overtime pay would disproportionately hit low-wage workers and women, led to new proposals. Under the new proposals, the cut in Sunday and overtime pay has been replaced by a 30% cut in annual leave pay. In order to do so, annual leave would have to be taken out of the realm of collective bargaining, passed as a national law and then reduced. Meanwhile, the government has invited the social partners to come up with an alternative plan that would lead to a similar five per cent reduction in unit labour costs. Trade unions Akava, SAK and STTK are negotiating with employers' federation EK, but face a difficult fight, because the government proposals match closely with employer demands.

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

.....
.....

France

Pay deal leads to end of dispute in sugar group

October 21, 2015

Trade unions and management at the country's biggest sugar group, Tereos, reached a pay settlement. A weeklong strike that has disrupted production ended and work was resumed at its plants. A strike had put a question mark over this year's production season, when Tereos plans to process about 15 million tonnes of sugar beet, or nearly half the French crop. The company said activity was returning to normal after it reached an agreement with the CFDT, CGT and FO unions, which launched the strike over pay. The signed protocol includes a 1.1 percent general wage increase and 0.3 percent for individual wage increases.

English: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/10/21/tereos-strike-agreement...>

Air France talks clash after lay-offs are announced

October 20, 2015

After failed talks with pilot unions, the conflict between Air France and its staff rose to unprecedented heights as the airline announced a restructuring plan involving 2,900 redundancies (1,700 ground staff, 900 cabin crew, and 300 pilots). Amidst a large protest, a group of some 100 protesters stormed the executive meeting where the restructuring plan was being finalised and attacked the Air France managers, tearing the shirts off their backs. The

executives were evacuated from the premises among both politicians and trade union condemnation of the violence against them. Management has said it is still willing to negotiate with the unions, but under specific conditions. The trade unions unconditionally deplored the social violence – and denounced the isolated incident in an otherwise peaceful demonstration. The international trade union confederation ITF expressed its opposition to any attempt to criminalise the actions of trade unions; ITF is demanding the reinstatement of the dismissed workers.

English: <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2015/october/itf-affiliates...>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/05/air-france-workers-storm-meeting...>

Paris garbage collectors' strike ends in pay deal

October 9, 2015

A strike of Paris garbage collectors has ended after an agreement was reached over wages. The refuse collectors went on a four-day strike over low wages. Shortly after, trade unions and the Paris municipality closed a deal including pay raises for certain workers and better promotion opportunities.

English: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/world/french-labour-tensions-ease-as-garbage...>

Prosegur strike enters third week

October 2, 2015

Workers at security company Prosegur are on strike after management withdrew a risk bonus. The workers are paid a risk bonus due to the danger security guards face on the job. The security bonus was included in the annual leave pay, but was unilaterally withdrawn by management, who argued it had been a miscalculation. The guards went on strike demanding their proper pay and respect for the dangerous nature of their work. As the strike enters its third week, Prosegur is taking the workers to court, contesting the legality of the strike.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/prosegur-strike-enters-third-week-lyon>

Social economic committee advises on posting

October 2, 2015

The economic, social and environmental council (CESE) was asked by the government to report on the situation of posted workers. In a report the result of their research and investigation has been published. The CESE states that the lack of proper enforcement has led to a weakening of workers' rights and to distortion of competition. The report formulates recommendations that might contribute to a better legal frame for posting and more guarantees for decent working conditions.

French: <http://www.lecese.fr/travaux-publies/les-travailleurs-d-tach-s>
http://www.lecese.fr/sites/default/files/pdf/Avis/2015/2015_24_travailleurs...

Germany

Hourly minimum wages tend to go beyond 10 euro

October 26, 2015

An analysis of the WSI-Tarifarchivs of the Hans-Böckler-Foundation reveals that there has been a positive upswing of minimum wages in the collective agreements. On average, these wages have reached a level that is substantially higher than the legal hourly minimum wage of 8.50 euro. In 11 sectors, the wage level even has increased to 10 euro or more. In four branches, the minimum wage has not yet reached the legally fixed level, but there is an agreement to lift the wages in 2016 to the appropriate level.

German: <http://www.boeckler.de/cps/rde/xchg/hbs/hs.xsl/...>

Bargaining in 2016 for 12 million workers

October 20, 2015

The WSI-Tarifarchivs of the Hans-Böckler-Foundation has produced an overview of the collective agreements that expire in the course of 2016. The authors found out that (between the end of 2015 and the end of 2016) collective bargaining will have to lead to new agreements on wages and working conditions of some 12 million workers, including the public sector at national, regional and local level. Negotiations will have to start at larger companies like Volkswagen, Deutsche Bahn and Deutsche Telekom. Large sectors like construction, banking, metal and electricians and the chemical industry are also scheduled for 2016.

German: <http://www.dgb.de/themen/++co++6f76315e-7709-11e5-b02a-52540023ef1a>

Expiring agreements in 2016 (in German): <http://www.boeckler.de/pdf/pm...>

Real renounces collective agreement, workers rally

October 1, 2015

Workers at retailer Real, subsidiary of Metro group, rallied outside the headquarters of Metro headquarters to protest against the retailer's unilateral decision to end the existing collective agreement. The company has been struggling with falling sales and Metro has repeatedly sought to sell it. Workers are outraged the company is now trying to cut back on wages and working conditions and demand a real social dialogue.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/german-retailer-faces-real-problems...>

Greece

Dockworkers strike

October 22, 2015

Dockworkers walked out in protest at the planned privatisations of the country's two biggest ports, a condition of a multi-billion euro bailout from international lenders. A statement from the dockworkers' trade union vowed to avert privatisations and accused the government of attempting to sell out to what they call 'foreign owned monopolies'. The trade union said its goal is to avoid any sales process, ensure labour relations through collective bargaining and ensure a sustainable pension system.

English: <http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/greek-port-workers-strike...>

Press and food workers demand accrued wages

October 3, 2015

Workers of the Press Delivery Agencies and ZAVEL Food Industries went on strike on 1 and 3 October respectively, demanding payment of accrued wages. The food workers additionally demand the cancellation of announced lay-offs at the company, whereas the press workers demand the signing of a new collective agreement. Both groups of workers organised picket lines to reinforce their demands. The press workers' picket line was successful, after an employer attempt to block it in court was overruled. ZAVEL food called the police when the picket line was being formed, leading to arrests of trade union leaders.

English: <http://pamehellas.gr/index.php/en/homepage/92-press-releases/...>

<http://pamehellas.gr/index.php/en/component/content/article/92-english-categories/...>

The future of collective bargaining

October 1, 2015

In an interesting paper, published by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Thorsten Schulten analyses the perspective for collective bargaining. Greece has experienced a deep decline in industry-wide collective agreements since 2011. This has been accompanied by radical decentralisation alongside a veritable dissolution of collective bargaining in large parts of the economy. So far, the Syriza government's proposals for the restoration of an effective collective bargaining system have failed because of the political resistance of the Troika. In particular, non-trade union representations of employees were permitted, extensions of collective agreements were prohibited and the favourability principle with regard to the hierarchy of collective bargaining levels was abolished.

English: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/11624.pdf>

.....
.....

Hungary

OECD reports on life quality

October 17, 2015

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released a country profile titled *How's Life in Hungary* as part of the international economic organization's 'Better Life Initiative'. The report spotlights the fact that children of poor families have it especially hard. There are marked regional disparities in the level of education, income and access to things such as broadband internet between Central Hungary and the Northern Great Plain regions. Other findings are that life satisfaction falls below the OECD average, that the household disposable income per capita is one of the lowest and the wage level is one of the lowest of average earnings in the OECD.

English: <http://www.oecd.org/hungary/Better%20Life%20Initiative%20country...>

Retail leads pressure on private sector employers to realise wage growth

October 7, 2015

Following employee protests this summer, with large numbers of workers threatening to quit, retail company Auchan has announced it will be raising wages by 10%. The company said that labour shortages and high personnel turnover make the raise necessary to avoid workers going to work abroad or for competitors. The raise at Auchan is expected to have broader implications on private sector bargaining, which is coming up on a new round of negotiations in January. Media reported earlier that there are tens of thousands of vacancies in the private sector that are not being filled, blaming the mismatch on low wages. Meanwhile, public sector wages are speculated to increase by 10% as well.

English: <http://dailynewshungary.com/wages-to-be-raised-in-retail/>

<http://dailynewshungary.com/tens-of-thousands-of-jobs-vacant-in-hungary/>

.....
.....

Iceland

Series of public sector strikes

October 17, 2015

A series of public sector strikes that was announced last month, as reported in the September newsletter, kicked in on 15 October. As no agreement was reached in the weeks leading up to the strike, 3,500 civil servants in 158 state agencies went on strike. Indefinite strikes were called at the National University Hospital, which has been plagued by strikes in 2014, but also at customs, the Directorate of Internal Revenue and the prefectural authorities. A second 48-hour strike of about 5,000 members of SFR Union of Public Workers and the Icelandic Union of Nurses' Aides began after negotiations were not successful. However, the state

mediator said there was definite willingness among negotiating parties to find a solution.

English: <http://icelandreview.com/news/2015/10/18/second-strike-starts-tonight>
http://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/politics_and_society/2015/10/15/massive_civil...

http://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/politics_and_society/2015/10/15/strikes...

.....

Ireland

Massive rail strike brings no results yet

October 23, 2015

A joint Siptu/NBRU committee is likely to meet to consider further industrial action to take place in the event of a dispute over union demands at Iarnród Éireann, the state-owned rail company, for payment for drivers' past productivity not being resolved. After talks aimed at resolving the row broke down at the Workplace Relations Commission, the unions have warned further strike action on the railways is inevitable unless there is a change in approach by management. The main dispute is about commitments on past productivity the company entered into in previous agreements with workers.

English: <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/unions-warn-of-more-train...>

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/talks-at-preventing-strike-action-at-irish-rail...>

Postal strike suspended - negotiators come to an agreement

October 15, 2015

Postal service throughout the country was restored after postal workers agreed to go back to work pending new round of talks on wages and rosters. Thirty workers handling An Post's automatic sorting machines, which handle 80% of the total mail, went on strike over new work rosters. The contractor that handles the machines, IO Systems, has been attempting to change work rosters from seven days of 12-hour shifts to five days of eight-hour shifts. Trade unions have said the change will lead to 22% reduction in pay for some workers. An IO Systems representative initially said that the conflict had dragged on for years and been referred to the Labour Court three times, which ruled in favour of IO Systems in each case. However, the massive disruption of postal services has forced the partners back to the table. The workers agreed to go back to work on the old work roster and wages, pending a new round of talks. Trade union CWU, the union representing workers at the centre of the row that halted the country's postal service for days, later on accepted proposals aimed at resolving the dispute.

English: <http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/union-urges-postal-workers...>

Lidl to pay living wage

October 8, 2015

Discount retailer Lidl has committed to paying its entire staff the living wage of €11.50 per hour. Some 20% of its staff, amounting to 700 of the 3800 employees, who are currently earning wages below the living wage, will start earning the living wage from 1 November onwards. The living wage is 30% above the national minimum wage, which is set at €8.65. Trade unions have welcomed the move, calling on other large employers to follow suit. However, not everyone has welcomed the pay rise, as farmers' associations fear the increased staff wages will result in even more aggressive pricing towards producers.

English: <http://www.rte.ie/news/business/2015/1008/733219-lidl-living-wage/>

Minimum wage in cleaning sector increases after pay deal

October 8, 2015

Contract cleaners have reached a pay deal raising their hourly wages to €9.75. The workers clean premises of public and private enterprises, which contract out the cleaning work. They tend to work on insecure contracts and for low wages. Following a long Fair Deal for Cleaners Campaign, the sector now has a minimum wage of €9.75.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/irish-cleaners-win-a-pay-rise>

.....

.....

Italy

Unions mobilise for renewal of public agreement

October 27, 2015

The trade unions CGIL, CISL and UIL are demanding a 150-euro pay rise in the public sector, adding that they were ready to stage a general strike if they do not get a positive response from the government. The unions have announced a 'very tough mobilisation' in support of the renewal of public-sector contracts given that the resources lined up in the 2016 budget bill (200 million euros) are just 'a tip' and a 'provocation' that do not guarantee a dignified contract for public-sector workers. Many public-sector workers have been waiting six or seven years for the renewal of their contracts.

English: <http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2015/10/27/unions-demand-150-euro...>
<http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/162728/CGIL--CISL--UIL-announce...>

Contractual wages and earnings

October 23, 2015

The monthly overview of contractual hourly wages shows that, at the end of September 2015, the coverage rate (share of national collective agreements in force for the wage setting) was 62.0% in terms of employees and 59.0% in terms of the total amount of wages. In September

2015 the hourly index was unchanged while the per employee index increased by 0.1% from August 2015. Compared with September 2014 the hourly index and the per employee index increased by 1.2%. During the period January-September 2015, both indices rose by 1.1% compared to the same period in 2014.

English: <http://www.istat.it/en/archive/171635>

Negotiators in chemical sector sign a deal

October 16, 2015

The employers' organisations in the chemical sector (Federchimica and Farindustria) and the trade unions (FILCTEM-CGIL, FEMCA-CISL, UILTEC-UIL) have concluded a national collective agreement for the period 2016-2018. Included is a nominal average wage increase of 90 euro, in three tranches (40 euro by January 2017, 35 euro by January 2018 and 15 euro by December 2018). The agreement applies to 171,000 workers and some 3,000 companies in the chemical, pharmaceutical, chemical fibres, abrasives, lubricants and LPG sectors. The agreement runs from 1 January 2016 and expires on 31 December 2018. Workers have to vote on the agreement before the end of November 2015.

Italian: <http://www.ipsoa.it/~media/Quotidiano/2015/10/16/Chimica-aziende...>

Pension plans put on ice

October 14, 2015

Trade union confederation CGIL has strongly criticised the postponement of a pension reform to let people retire earlier on lower pensions. According to the union, the pension measure should be in the 2016 budget. Renzi had said it would cause 'problems' to try and insert pension flexibility into the 2016 budget. In the September Newsletter, we reported that the government was working towards a change to pension laws that would let women retire three years early, at 62-63, while taking a 10% pension cut, taking effect in 2016.

English: <http://www.gazzettadelsud.it/news/english/162480/Renzi...>

.....
.....

Latvia

Care workers rally for higher quality

October 21, 2015

The Council of Latvia's Trade Union of Health and Social Care Workers has decided to hold a protest at the Saeima (parliament) building and launch preparations for a strike. The main reason for the protest is the further reductions in the health budget planned by the government. According to the trade union, the government has set the healthcare budget at 3% of gross domestic product in 2016, or less than 3.1% this year. This is contrary to the World Health Organization and European Commission's recommendations to improve access to healthcare and quality of healthcare. The trade union has three demands: higher healthcare

quotas, reducing patients' co-payments, and increasing average wages for healthcare workers.

English: http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/markets_and_companies/...

Teachers unions warn of impending pay cut if reform goes ahead

October 14, 2015

Teachers unions have warned that the proposed teacher remuneration scheme will result in a pay cut for 55% of teachers. In the proposed 'money follows the student' system, teacher remuneration would be made dependent on the number of students in the classroom. The Trade Union of Education and Science Employees calculated the change would mean a de facto pay cut for 370 out of 651 general education teachers.

English: <http://www.leta.lv/eng/home/important/...>

Liechtenstein

Employment report 2014

October 12, 2015

The government has released a final report on employment for 2014 produced by the Statistical Office. Detailed statistics reveal that the country is largely depending on commuters (53.3% of the workforce). Largest employer is the services sector (60% of the workforce), followed by the industrial sector (39%).

German: <http://www.llv.li/files/as/beschaefigungsstatistik-31-dezember-2014.pdf>

Lithuania

Dreaded liberalisation of labour code appears set to clear Parliament

October 15, 2015

Parliament has adopted the first set of amendments to the labour code and accompanying laws meant to create a more liberalised labour market. The so-called new social model, which trade unions are mobilising against (as reported in last month's newsletter), would significantly reduce workers' legal protection. The proposed Labour Code, amongst others, would lower wages by no longer paying overtime, while simultaneously requiring employees to work mandatory overtime. The law raises the maximum weekly working hours to 60 hours per week and makes it easier as well as cheaper for employers to fire workers. The new social model includes 7 main and 27 accompanying laws that are being debated in Parliament and will be tabled in the plenary session on 24 November 2015 for adoption.

English: <http://en.delfi.lt/lithuania/politics/labour-code-reform-package...>

Luxembourg

Wage trend stays very moderate

October 29, 2015

The average wage costs increased by only 0.8 percent in the first half of 2015, according to figures released by the statistical office Statec. This increase is particularly low compared to previous years: 2.9% in 2014 and 3.6% in 2013. The reasons for the weak increase are multiple, according to Statec: first, the country is following the prevailing euro zone trend towards moderate wages, due to low inflation. Moreover, there was no indexation of wages since late 2013, which mechanically limits the upward pressure on wages.

English: <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/catalogue-publications/conjoncture-flash...>

Labour and social cohesion - risk of poverty remains high

October 16, 2015

In the 2015 Labour and Social Cohesion Report, released by the statistical office STATEC, some positive results are revealed, but also a set of alarming figures. With an unemployment rate of 5.9% Luxembourg, compared to the European average of 10.4 %, is still doing well and comes in fourth after Germany, Austria and Malta. Most affected are people with little education. Since 2000, salaries have risen by about 46%, more than in any other EU country. However, purchasing power has not matched this rate and only increased by 8% since 2000. Since the crisis, it increased slightly for the first time in 2013, +1.9%, and +1.2% in 2014. Moreover, one in five citizens (19%), according to Europe-wide calculations, lives in threat of poverty and threatened with social exclusion. In 2003, this rate was still at 15.8%. Chapter 3 of the reports provides detailed figures on wage developments, purchasing power and the effect of the economic crisis on earnings.

English: <http://www.wort.lu/en/business/statec-social-report-2015-risk-of-poverty...>

<http://www.statistiques.public.lu/en/news/social-conditions/social-live/2015/...>

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

Malta

Court declares bus strike illegal

October 24, 2015

The court has confirmed that a bus strike in September was ‘illegal’. Malta Public Transport stated that it was well within its rights when it stopped both the trade unions General Workers' Union and Union Haddiema Maghqudin from striking in the interest of the public's right to mobility. The court confirmed that when there is an industrial action, the unions and employees must comply with Article 64 of the Employment and Industrial Act, and therefore 50% of the bus service must be maintained. According to the company, quarrels between the GWU and UHM over worker representation at Malta Public Transport are seriously hindering the renewal of existing agreements.

English: <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151024/local/...>

Immigration officers to take industrial action

October 3, 2015

Immigration officers, organised by the GWU, have announced industrial action. The officers will open their immigration booths half an hour late, not wear uniforms or answer phone calls, but they will be checking passports. The industrial action follows a government announcement that it will not be negotiating working conditions of immigration officers until a court case on the matter has been suspended.

English: <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2015-10-03/local-news/...>

Netherlands

Retailer agrees to end reduced youth wage scales

October 26, 2015

Trade union FNV has reached a collective bargaining agreement covering 2,800 employees with the retailer group De Bijenkorf in which the store's young employees will be paid full adult wages instead of the reduced youth wage. The result fits in a campaign of the trade union under the slogan equal pay for equal work. As a result an 18-year-old and a 23-year-old doing the same job will be entitled to the same pay. The collective agreement runs from 1 October 2015 to 1 July 2017, with pay increases as of 1 February 2017 and 1 May 2017.

English: <http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/10/26/bijenkorf-scraps...>

Ambulance workers on strike

October 19, 2015

Workers at Ambulancezorg Nederland (AZN) organised a series of strikes after talks over a collective agreement failed. The negotiations have been underway for over a year, but no agreement was reached. The ambulance workers are demanding a 2.5% pay hike over one year, more training and for workers over 55 years to be exempted from night shifts. But, the employer sticks to an offer of 3%, spread over two years. During the strike, ambulances

remain available for emergencies, but scheduled patient transport is cancelled. The two parties have agreed to search for an independent mediator to lead the stalled talks.

English: <http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2015/10/ambulance-workers...>
<http://www.nltimes.nl/2015/10/07/ambulance-crews-first-ever-nationwide-strike...>

Public transport strikes in Amsterdam and Utrecht

October 15, 2015

Public transport workers in Amsterdam and Utrecht are organising a rush hour strike on 15 October. The strikes will mean there are no buses, trams or metro services in Amsterdam and no buses in Utrecht until 8.30, with transport expected to be back to normal between 10:30 and 11:00. The FNV transport union is organising the action in a series of public sector strikes following a pay deal from which it was excluded, as reported in last month's newsletter. Utrecht bus company Qbuzz attempted to block the strike by going to court, arguing that as a private company its employees are not covered under the disputed agreement and will not be affected by it. However, the court rejected the reasoning because Qbuzz workers are part of the same pension fund as the other workers and will be affected by changes in the pension fund.

English: <http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2015/10/public-transport-workers...>

SMEs in metal have a new collective agreement

October 14, 2015

Negotiations in the metal sector stranded early this year and a series of strikes started. Finally, the negotiators in the Metal & Technical branches (mainly SMEs) reached an agreement. The agreement foresees a structural increase of pay of 4.05% (over the period March 2015 – May 2017) and a one-off increase of 0.65%. The applicable youth scales go up by an average of 7%. The agreement makes it easier for individual workers to opt for a 4-days working week, in exchange of existing holidays and other days off. The strikes in the larger metal branches are still continuing after unsuccessful negotiations.

Dutch: <https://www.fnv.nl/sector-en-cao/alle-sectoren/metaal/metaal-en-techniek/...>

.....
.....

Norway

Transfer of jobs to low-cost states considered

October 14, 2015

The problematic outlook in the oil and energy sector probably will get another blow as Statoil, still the country's biggest company, is seriously evaluating whether to move hundreds of administrative jobs to a lower-cost 'business centre,' probably in an eastern European country. The move would have serious consequences to the Stavanger area where Statoil is based, with economists predicting the region faces at least three more years of declining real

estate prices and harder times. At the moment, the company is still working to finish the early downsizing processes, which have reduced the total staffing by around 20% since 2013. The last round will result in between 1,000 and 1,500 workers leaving the company within the 2016.

English: <http://www.newsinenglish.no/2015/10/14/statoil-may-move-many-jobs-abroad/>

Poland

Teachers protest for better wages and working conditions

October 16, 2015

More than 15,000 teachers took the streets to protest against the actual education policy. The protesters demanded an increase in funds spent on education (in 2015, the percentage of GDP invested was of only 2.52 percent) and an increase in teacher's wages. An increase in teacher salaries has been frozen for three years. Teachers demand financial recognition for the teaching profession and a 10% increase in wages.

English: http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/3757

Union survey finds truck drivers' rest conditions appalling

October 8, 2015

A survey executed by Solidarnosc during this summer's heat wave, found truck drivers experienced appalling rest conditions. The union questioned 650 drivers, none of whom had had any daily or weekly rest away from their lorry that summer. Only 12 drivers had air conditioning in the cabin, but even those did not reap the benefits, because it had been disabled as soon as the motor was turned off. Temperatures in the cabin during rest time varied between 39 and 45 degrees Celsius in 97% of the cases.

English: <http://www.etf-europe.org/etf-news-online.cfm/newsdetail/11220>

Taxi drivers protest against illegal competition

October 1, 2015

Taxi drivers in Krakow and Warsaw have blocked roads to protest against illegal competition in the sector. The drivers moved through the city centres at a snail's pace, blocking two lanes and honking continuously. Licensed cabs are angry about competition by Uber and other unlicensed taxis, which are able to offer lower prices because they do not pay for licenses or taxes. The taxi drivers are calling for better legislation and more inspection.

English: <http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul/223193,Taxi-drivers-bring-Krakow...>

.....

Portugal

Material deprivation reported

October 17, 2015

A new increase in the relative median of at-risk-of-poverty gap and a strong inequality in income distribution are indicated in a report from the National Institute of Statistics released to commemorate the International Day of Eradicating Poverty. The number of elderly people who experienced material deprivation rose between 2013 and 2014, reaching one in four of this population group. The report found that whilst the largest group facing such deprivation, minors aged under 18, was broadly unchanged with 27.5% at risk, it was among the elderly that this risk had most risen, up from 23.1% to 25.2% between 2013 and 2014. The study also looked at overall household expenditure, running from utility bills through to repairs and maintenance and found that the 2014 figure of 13.4% of average expenditure on such items to be the highest in a decade.

English:

https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUES...

Aldi closes stores, lay-offs expected

October 14, 2015

Low-cost supermarket Aldi has announced that it will be closing four stores. Personnel at the Entroncamento, Ourém and Odivelas outlets will be transferred to other stores. However, all staff at the fourth store in Portalegre is expected to be laid off.

English: <http://portugalresident.com/aldi-closes-four-stores-in-portugal>

.....

Romania

Parliament discussing employer subsidies to hire young workers

October 6, 2015

Parliament is discussing a youth employment policy that would subsidise employers who hire young people without work experience. Under the plan, employers have to employ workers under the age of 30 on indefinite contracts to qualify for a subsidy of one time the gross minimum wage and an exemption from social security payments on the particular employee for the first 18 months. Employers will have to keep the young workers on for at least 36 months, or risk having to pay back the subsidies.

English: <http://www.romania-insider.com/romania-pay-companies-hire-youngsters/...>

SITT organising the IT sector

October 1, 2015

Timisoara IT Trade Union (SITT) has started organising IT workers in Alcatel Lucent Romania, Accenture Managed Services Romania and Wipro Technologies Romania following a merger with Nokia systems. The trade union set up a campaign handing out coffee, showing a photo exhibition, surveying workers about their concerns and explained the SITT strategies.

English: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/news/organizing-it-workers-romania>

.....

Serbia

Labour market in 2014

October 23, 2015

The Statistical Office (SORS) has issued revised Labour Force Survey data for 2014 and the first two quarters of 2015. Comparison of the first and second quarter of 2015 with the corresponding quarters in 2014 indicates a shift of unemployment, partly into employment and partly into inactivity. Over a twelve month period the official unemployment figure decreased from 20.9% in the 2nd quarter of 2014 to 17.9% in the same quarter in 2015.

English: <http://webzrs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/public/PublicationView...>

.....

Slovakia

Overview of sectoral wage development

October 23, 2015

In 2015, wages have increased by 2.8 percent, below the expected 3.2 percent. Wages grew the most in the insurance and automotive sectors, while the energy sector reported the lowest increase. These are some of the results of the latest remuneration study elaborated by PwC. In 2016, the companies plan to increase wages by 2.9 percent when wages are expected to grow most significantly in the services and information and communication technologies (ITC) sectors.

English: <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20062152/ict-is-the-best-paying-sector-in-slovakia.html>

Minimum wage to increase to €405

October 14, 2015

Following the failure of social partners to negotiate a new minimum wage, the government has announced it is raising the minimum wage to €405. The increase comes close to the €410 that had been suggested by trade unions and remains far from employers' requests to keep it at the current €380. The raise will also lift the minimum wage from 50% of the average salary to 51%. Trade unions have welcomed the hike, whereas employers warned that low educated workers would find it increasingly difficult to get a job, as the minimum wage was raised by a total 15% over recent years.

English: <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20061675/minimum-wage-to-increase.html>

Slovenia

Detailed report on wages and paid employment

October 22, 2015

The statistical office is working on detailed and final 2014 data and graphs on number of persons in paid employment by amount of gross and net earnings. In 2014, 65% of persons in paid employment had below average gross earnings and 63.1% below average net earnings. Gross median monthly pay stood at 1,353 euro in 2014, which is nearly 300 euro less than the average gross wage of 1,637 euro. Persons in paid employment in the public sector had on average a higher education than persons in paid employment in the private sector and their earnings were above the national average. The labour cost data for 2014 indicate that the average monthly labour costs per person in paid employment amounted 2,104.23 euro, which is an increase of 1.0% compared to 2013. Average labour costs per hour worked amounted to 14.71 euro.

English: <http://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/show-news?id=5547&idp=15&headerbar=4>

<http://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/show-news?id=5568&idp=15&headerbar=4>

Spain

Train drivers strike in a row

October 16, 2015

Workers at the public train operator Renfe and Adif, the company that is responsible for most of the country's railway infrastructure, have been striking every Friday since the start of September. The strikes are taking place on Friday during three separate time periods. The trade unions want more staffing and are calling for a replacement plan for aging personnel. They are as well protesting against the breakdown of negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement.

English: <http://www.thelocal.es/20151016/spanish-train-drivers-set-to-strike-on-friday>

Report documents growth of poverty

October 16, 2015

Although the government permanently comes up with news on economic recovery and employment growth (and a decrease of unemployment to 21.2%), a report of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) is less positive. According to the report, the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion rose to 13.6 million in 2014, representing 29.2 percent of the total population. It reveals that a further 790,800 people fell into the group during 2014, a rise of two percentage points on the year before. This marks an overall rise of 4.5 percent since 2009 when the effects of the economic crisis really started to bite.

English: <http://www.thelocal.es/20151015/economic-recovery-almost-one-third-of...>

Focus on the report (in Spanish): <http://eapn.es/ARCHIVO/documentos/noticias/...>

Court rejects labour demands against Coca Cola bottler

October 9, 2015

The national court defeated labour demands and allowed bottling plant Coca Cola Iberian to proceed with its downsizing plans. The ruling is the end of an extended legal and industrial dispute, reported in this newsletter between January 2014 and April 2015. After Coca Cola Iberian announced closing four of its eleven bottling plants and dismissing 850 workers, trade unions took the company to court. The first ruling was a trade union victory, ordering Coca Cola Iberian to reinstate the workers at the same wages, due to the company having violated the right to strike and failing to inform workers properly. After the ruling, however, the workers were reinstated at different positions from those they had held before the lay-offs. The unions took the company to court again to demand reinstatement of the workers to their previous position. The latest court ruling, however, allows Coca Cola Iberian to proceed with its restructuring plans and assign workers to different jobs.

English: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/10/business/international/coca-cola...>

.....
.....

Sweden

Control working conditions posted workers has to improve

October 22, 2015

A parliamentary Posted Workers Committee, made up of representatives from all political parties, has formulated tearing up the so-called Lex Laval (i.e. the legislative changes introduced in 2010 in the wake of the so-called Laval case) in order to improve the terms and conditions for foreign workers who are posted to the country. The committee suggests that trade unions are given the right to resort to industrial action in order to push through a collective agreement with minimum wage demands, a so-called posted workers collective

agreement. According to the proposals, within ten days the posted company should appoint a representative with the power to negotiate and sign collective agreements if a trade union demands it. The proposal says trade unions should be able to demand documentation, which proves that the posted employer adheres to minimum terms and conditions. Posted workers should be allowed access to Swedish courts in order to demand minimum terms and conditions according to collective agreements, regardless of whether they belong to trade unions that have signed agreements or not.

English: <http://www.nordiclbourjournal.org/nyheter/news-2015/article.2015-10-21...>

Roboting, wage growth and skilled jobs

October 13, 2015

In an article that originally appeared in the Dagens Nyheter newspaper economic analyst Mårten Blix outlines how to make sure jobs are not lost when digitalisation grows and robots take over skilled labour. He notices that there has been significant job polarisation in many OECD countries in recent decades, resulting in a shrinking middle class. In Sweden, this trend has so far taken place mostly through an increase of highly-paid jobs and strong real wage growth over the past 20 years. This is in contrast to the United States, where large groups have not received any increase in real wages over long periods. He states that the trend of job polarisation will continue. According to the author the risk that large groups in Sweden will experience weak wage growth and that robots will take over depends on how the challenges are managed – by politicians and by the labour market partners. In the end, technological developments will lead to greater prosperity, but the path could be tumultuous if unwise decisions or no decisions at all, are made.

English: <http://www.thelocal.se/jobs/article/will-robots-take-over-your-job-in-sweden>

Six-hour working day gaining momentum

October 1, 2015

The publication of a study in scientific journal *The Lancet* has generated international attention to Swedish companies' increasingly implementing six-hour workdays. The study by researchers at University College London highlights the negative health consequences of long work hours. Several Swedish companies, on the contrary, have testified to the benefits of the six-hour workday. The firms report productivity did not go down and employee satisfaction increased.

English: <http://www.staffingindustry.com/eng/Research-Publications/Daily-News/...>

http://www.novinite.com/view_news...

.....
.....

Switzerland

Cross-border work in Ticino region analysed

October 22, 2015

A study commissioned by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and led by the Institute of Economic Research (IRE) at the University of Italian Switzerland in Lugano, examines the consequences of cross-border workers – or ‘frontalieri’ – on Ticino’s job market. After publication was pushed back several times, its controversial conclusions were finally leaked to the press. The study concludes that nothing proves that resorting to cross-border workers has increased the risk of unemployment among the resident population – neither in Switzerland nor in Ticino.

English: <http://www.thelocal.ch/20151023/ticino-job-market-study-angers-locals>

French: <http://www.tdg.ch/suisse/etude-frontaliers-choque-tessin/story/...>

Press statement (in Italian): <http://www.press.usi.ch/en/comunicati-stampa/...>

Restructuring at Credit Suisse leads to massive job losses

October 21, 2015

The chief executive of Credit Suisse has announced a new strategy of the bank that will axe thousands of jobs and raise billions in fresh capital. The bank aims to save 3.5 billion Swiss francs (3.2 billion euro) by the end of 2018 by, among other things, cutting loose a significant number of the some 60,000 people it employs globally. In all, some 5,000 jobs are likely to be cut worldwide, including 1,600 in Switzerland.

English: <http://www.thelocal.ch/20151021/credit-suisse-announces-5000-job-cuts>

.....
.....

Turkey

Mulberry supplier workers reach deal on unionising

October 20, 2015

A long dispute at one of the suppliers of handbags and purses for the luxury brand Mulberry has ended (see our July and September Newsletters). The factory management has agreed to allow the organisation of a trade union. Pending court cases against the unions will be dropped and workers involved in the industrial action will receive full compensation. The nine-month campaign included demonstrations worldwide. The unions think that it is of the utmost importance to monitor the implementation of the deal.

English: <http://www.industrialunion.org/industrial-campaign-contributes-to...>

Dismay and protest after attack on peace union march

October 12, 2015

Four major trade unions have called two days of general strike following a brutal terrorist on the Ankara Work, Peace and Democracy rally. On 10 October, a terrorist attack hit an Ankara peace march organised by trade unions DISK, KESK, TMMOB and TTB, leaving around 100 people dead and many more injured. Police forces dispersed the rallying marchers after two bombs exploded, using tear gas and water cannons against crowds of people who came to pay their respect to the dead and leave flowers in the area. The trade unions have called for two days of general strike, demanding a thorough and transparent investigation into the massacre. Turkey has a history of violence targeted at trade union rallies, as reported in previous May newsletters, and carries tragic memories of the 1977 bloody May Day killings.

English: <http://www.industrialall-union.org/industrialall-condemns-brutal-terror-attack...>

.....
.....

United Kingdom

Trade union against supply policy of teachers

October 29, 2015

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) started a campaign against the policy to use supply agencies in the education sector. In the frame of the NUT's lobby of supply agencies its members gathered on 28 October in Central London outside the headquarters of Protocol Education and then moved on to Hays plc to voice their concerns about working as a supply teacher through an agency. Lobbyists distributed leaflets to passers-by highlighting their concerns about the unacceptable pay and pension position facing supply teachers employed by agencies, and the excessive levels of commission paid by schools to fuel agencies' profits and senior employees' salaries.

English: <http://www.teachers.org.uk/supply>

Compliance report only 'tip of the iceberg'

October 23, 2015

According to a report published by the government, 115 employers have failed to pay 1,700 workers the National Minimum Wage (NMW). However, the trade union confederation TUC estimates that at least 250,000 workers were being denied their legal pay, and that only a quarter of the offenders are being caught. The TUC argued in a 2013 report that the NMW enforcement regime must be subject to a process of continual improvement in order to keep up with those employers who actively look for new ways to try to evade their responsibility to pay the National Minimum Wage. One of the prominent non-complying companies named in the report is the fashion retailer Monsoon.

English: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/labour-market/workplace-issues/...>

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

Living wage debated

October 22, 2015

In a Global Labour Column the plans to introduce a 'national living wage' for workers over 25 are discussed. The government intends to increase the living wage to £9 per hour by 2020. Although this appears to be high, the living wage would still be less than two-thirds of the median wage in the UK. The author concludes that, although a higher minimum wage is welcome, increasing its level from the current rate of £6.70 per hour to upwards of £7.20 per hour raises concerns regarding the effectiveness of the existing enforcement regime. Businesses in traditional low wage sectors, including agriculture, hospitality, retail and social care, have argued they will find it difficult to pay the national living wage. Minimum wages only help those who rely upon them if they are paid, or put differently, if they are effectively enforced.

English: <http://column.global-labour-university.org/2015/10/the-national-living-wage...>

Lidl will also pay Northern Ireland workers living wages

October 8, 2015

The supermarket chain Lidl has reversed its position not to include workers in Northern Ireland in the pay rise it has awarded to workers in the rest of the UK. Last month, Lidl said it would introduce a living wage of £8.20 an hour, or £9.35 an hour in London. However, Northern Ireland staff workers were excluded. The company has added that a similar pay commitment is being made to staff in the Republic of Ireland.

English: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-34471260>

Deal at national gallery

October 2, 2015

Workers at the National Gallery have reached an agreement over wages and working conditions, following a 100-day strike. As reported in the March newsletter, workers at the National Gallery initiated industrial action after management announced that 400 of the total 600 jobs would be outsourced. The agreement that was reached on 2 October includes guarantees for staffing levels and rosters, unchanged working conditions for existing staff and comparable conditions for new staff. The National Gallery will also continue to pay the London living wage. A senior PCS trade union representative, who was fired on the eve of the strike, was reinstated.

English: <http://www.world-psi.org/en/uk-pcs-celebrates-national-gallery-agreement>

.....
.....

For more information, please contact the editor Jan Cremers, Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (AIAS) cbn-aiaas@uva.nl or the Head of communications at the ETUI, Willy De Backer wdebacker@etui.org. For previous full issues of the *Collective bargaining newsletter* please visit www.etui.org/E-Newsletters/Collective-bargaining-newsletter. Since June 2013 readers can consult our archive and search through all articles in our database at www.cbnarchive.eu.

You may find further information on the ETUI at www.etui.org, and on the AIAS at www.uva-aiaas.net.

© ETUI aisbl, Brussels 2015. All rights reserved. We encourage the distribution of this newsletter and of the information it contains, for non-commercial purposes and provided the source is credited. The ETUI is not responsible for the content of external internet sites. The ETUI is financially supported by the European Union. The European Union is not responsible for any use made of the information contained in this publication.

This email is sent from www.etui.org.

To unsubscribe from this newsletter click here

<https://crm.etui.org/civicrm/mailling/unsubscribe?reset=1&jid=136&qid=52526&h=8db232f85a87572b>

To never receive email from the ETUI, click here

<https://crm.etui.org/civicrm/mailling/optout?reset=1&jid=136&qid=52526&h=8db232f85a87572b>

This email is sent from

*European Trade Union Institute
Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5 box 4
Brussels, BRU 1210
Belgium*