

# collective bargaining

Issue 7-8/2018 July-August

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

### Ryanair workers active across Europe

*August 28, 2018*

Pilots and crew members working at Ryanair organised a series of industrial actions all over Europe. Cabin staff in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain walked out for 48 hours in July. Pilots in Germany, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands went on strike on 10 August in the biggest one-day strike the cheap carrier has faced. The company that was notorious for its refusal to recognise and negotiate with unions changed this policy in December 2017. However, bargaining did not really come off the ground. The latest actions led to agreements in Ireland and Italy.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) [in English \(3\) ....](#)

### ECB publishes updated wage data

*August 22, 2018*

The ECB signals in its economic bulletin that wages in the Euro-area are on the rise. Collective wages rose 2.2% in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2018, the highest increase since 2012. The bulletin provides economic charts with data that point to a continued upward shift from a trough in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2016. Growth in compensation per employee increased from 1.8% in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2017 to 2.0% in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018, confirming the recent upward trend. Growth in negotiated wages increased from 1.5% in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2017 to 1.8% in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018. Recent wage agreements and the broadening of wage growth across sectors support the expectation of a further pick-up in wage growth. The developed wage growth follows the direction of improving labour market conditions.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The ECB-Bulletin: [in English ...](#)

### European workforce Amazon fed up

*July 28, 2018*

Workers in Spain, Germany and Poland coordinated industrial actions at Amazon during a prime day sale. The coordinated industrial actions are the largest that the company has ever seen. At the same time as union members at Amazon Germany and Spain were on strike, their Polish counterparts, who don't have enough members yet to call a strike under local law, organised work slow-downs. Workers in the UK did not participate in the industrial actions but engaged in protest against Amazon with slogans like 'We are workers, not robots'.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### Divers practices in social dialogue in public services

*July 19, 2018*

The ILO published a report that analyses the regulation and practice of social dialogue in public services within a group of European Union countries. The selection of practices of social dialogue shows how the principles of ILO Convention No. 151 that concerns the protection of the right to organise, and procedures for determining conditions of employment in the public service have been implemented through legislation and/or collective bargaining. According to the introduction of the report, dialogue and bargaining can and should be key contributors to public sector efficiency, performance and equity.

Read the Report: [in English ...](#)

### **The functioning of decentralised bargaining**

*July 19, 2018*

A critical contribution to Social Europe assesses the mainstream idea shared by international economic institutions that collective bargaining should take place at the level of individual companies. The author concludes that what matters for good labour market performance is not whether collective bargaining takes place at company level but whether there is coordination. Employment rates are significantly higher when trade unions and employer federations manage to align the bargaining agendas of the different negotiating parties upon common objectives (Belgium, Nordics, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands). Also striking is that predominantly centralised collective bargaining systems, even if only weakly coordinated, also show relatively better employment outcomes compared to fully decentralised bargaining.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Metal bargaining compared in 4 EU countries**

*July 5, 2018*

The SUNI (Smart Unions for New Industry) project intended to explore similarities and differences in the role that trade unions, as relevant stakeholders in industrial innovation and socio-economic transition, are playing in influencing the development of the industry in the countries. A comparative report and four case studies were published, dedicated to the metal trade unions in Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden, including their bargaining tradition. It is said that the unions' awareness of this era of change and the willingness to proactively participate are a good start, but more effort is needed to integrate their initiatives into a broader framework of co-designed and co-implemented development paths at national, regional and workplace level.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **The extension of collective agreements as a policy tool**

*July 4, 2018*

The ILO published a basic volume on the extension of collective agreements. The different chapters in this volume are about the extension of collective agreements as an act of public policy. According to the authors, many countries make provision for the Minister of Labour, a public agency or the court to extend a collective agreement to all employers and employees that fall within its scope. This is usually demarcated by sector or occupation; sometimes, especially in respect of non-wage issues, agreements are extended nationwide across sectors. The extension generalises the terms and conditions of employment, agreed between organised firms and workers, represented through their association(s) and union(s), to the non-organised firms within a sector, occupation or territory. It creates a level playing field for firms operating in similar markets. Specific chapters are dedicated to Germany, Portugal, the Nordic Countries, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The report: [in English ...](#)

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## **Austria**

### **The autumn bargaining in metal**

*August 30, 2018*

Trade union GPA-djp and PRO-GE have fixed their planning for this autumn's collective bargaining in the metal sector. It is expected that the talks will start in the second half of September. The unions intend to work towards an industry-wide agreement, although the negotiations start at sub sectoral level. The basic demands are the respect for workers' rights, improvement of pay and the reduction of the working time. The current monthly minimum wage in the sector stands at 1,848 euro.

Read on: [in German ...](#) The union leaflet: [in German ...](#)

### **How longer working time is perceived**

*July 23, 2018*

Notwithstanding massive protests the government adopted an act that leads to a higher maximum of the weekly working time (to 60 hours). The Chamber of Labour published in its journal *Wirtschaftspolitik-*

*Standpunkte* a fact check and the results of a survey on this theme. The interviewed works councils identified the creeping increase in working pressure and the increasing density of work as central problems at the workplace (48% are not satisfied or not at all satisfied). More than half of the surveyed works councils (52%) even stated that the pressure of work and the amount of work has increased in the last 12 months. And almost a fifth of those surveyed (19%) find that the health situation of workers has deteriorated. On the other hand, the respondents see no need at all for the announced working time flexibilization.

The journal: [in German ...](#)

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## Belgium

### **Government formulates controversial ‘work deal’**

*August 29, 2018*

The cabinet agreed on a reform during the summer break that was labelled the ‘work deal’. One key feature in the deal, which includes some 20 measures, is the reform of unemployment benefit payments. During the first six months that workers are unemployed, they will receive a higher level of unemployment benefit than is currently the case. After six months the level of unemployment benefit paid will fall more rapidly than up to now. The package led to divergent reactions. Trade union confederation ABVV/FGTB has announced a general strike on 2 October to protest against the deal and the still pending reform of the pension system.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in French ...](#) [in Dutch ...](#)

### **IVAGO strike ended**

*August 9, 2018*

Garbage collectors in the Ghent city went back to their work. The collectors at waste management company Ivago held a strike action mainly to protest high work pressure. Due to the strike action rubbish was piling up in the streets. The trade unions demand reinforcements of collective agreements, a variable working timetable during periods of high temperatures, and more respect from the company towards its employees. After involvement of the mayor of Ghent, the unions postponed the strike actions.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **48-hour strike railway**

*July 12, 2018*

After a 48-hour strike trade unions and management of the rail authority SNCB/NMBS have reached an agreement which is likely to rule out further industrial action for the summer. The main element of the agreement involves an increase of 6% in purchasing-power payments for train drivers - a formula that allows the SNCB to treat it as a one-off allowance, rather than a change in pay conditions. In return, drivers have agreed to a productivity increase of 2%.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Annual wage increase calculated at 3.9%**

*July 10, 2018*

A study by HR consultancy Hudson, compiled from a sample of 755 companies, reveals that wages increased by 3.9% over the period 2017 to 2018, compared to the previous year. In the period 2016 to 2017, wage growth reached an average of 2%. The increase is said to be the most significant in five years. According to Hudson the growth is due ‘to higher index-linking than last year, but also to the percentage that the organisations surveyed have awarded their employees over and above wage indexation, specifically an average of 1.7%’. The increase is due to both economic growth and the increase in the employment rate.

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## Bulgaria

### **Annual wage increase 8.2%**

*August 10, 2018*

According to the National Statistical Institute, the average gross monthly wage increased by an annual 8.2% to 1,125 BGN (575.2 euro) in the second quarter of 2018. Highest wages were registered in the information and communication sector, followed by financial and insurance activities. The lowest gross salary, was recorded in the sector of accommodation and food services. The statistics reveal that the total income average per household member during the second quarter of 2018 was 1,474 BGN; an increase by 8.7% compared to the same quarter of 2017.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The data on wages: [in English ...](#) The data on household income: [in English ...](#)

### **Report on income and poverty**

*August 2, 2018*

The World Bank Group and the National Statistical Institute published a report on income and poverty, as a result of the project 'Mapping poverty in the new EU member states'. The main project objective was to calculate the shares of population at-risk-of poverty at low territorial levels (districts and municipalities). The results of the analysis reveal that there are two concentrations. One of them is in the northwest part of the country and is bordering better off municipalities, while the other one is in the east of the country's centre. The data on working poor indicate that employment is not, by itself, sufficient to overcome poverty.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Croatia**

### **Shipbuilders strike over unpaid wages**

*August 29, 2018*

Some 4500 workers at Uljani, the countries' largest shipbuilding group, went on strike to protest unpaid salaries. They called for management to step down because the workers have lost confidence in them. The unions said that strikes will end once July salaries are paid. The workers marched down the streets and were joined by more and more citizens during their protests. After a meeting with the government, a trade union spokesperson stated that efforts are being made to secure funds through commercial bank loans.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Strike Croatia Airlines prohibited**

*August 27, 2018*

A strike planned by Croatian Airlines' pilots, cabin crew and technical staff was prohibited with the argument that it was illegal. The County Court in Zagreb had ruled that the strike action planned by the ORCA and HSPP trade unions was illegal and would cause a big financial damage. Therefore, the court had prohibited the unions from organising and conducting the strike. The unions appealed against the verdict, but the Supreme Court confirmed the court's decision, with the argument that the legal preconditions were not met because no conciliation procedures had been applied before the strike announcement.

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## **Cyprus**

### **Unions reject government proposals**

*August 24, 2018*

Teacher unions unanimously rejected a government proposal to solve the ongoing teaching dispute and are focussing on organising a day of action. In July 2018, the teachers already went on strike to protest their disapproval of government proposals, which will come into effect in September 2018 and were made without consulting the education trade unions. The government proposals included reduction in the off-class hours for the class supervisor from two to one. At the same time, absence record-keeping would be undertaken by the school administrations. The government also proposed a reduction in the teaching periods.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Czechia

### **Agreement on public sector workers' wages**

*August 29, 2018*

The coalition government has reached a framework agreement on increasing public sector salaries. The idea is to apply a differentiated range of salary increases of about 8% on average, with workers with the lowest salaries will get the highest increases. Most workers will receive a 4% rise and for certain categories it ranges from 7.3 to 15.9%. Earlier in August it was agreed to increase the salaries of teachers by 15%, not including bonuses. Non-teaching school workers will receive a 10% increase.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Five hours work a day**

*August 28, 2018*

The 40-hour workweek – five days at eight hours – has historically been the standard in the country. The standard working week of 41.1 hours rates among the longest in Europe. Trade unions have been pushing for a shorter working week by two and a half hours while maintaining the same level of income, in the campaign 'End of the Long Work Week'. A recent survey shows that workers are even dreaming of much more – a five-hour work day and unlimited holidays. The survey revealed that 45% of the respondents would welcome a five-hour work day, saying it would significantly reduce their stress and boost their well-being.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Different calculation of minimum wage**

*August 21, 2018*

Government officials proposed a new manner to make minimum wage calculations. They want to set minimum wage at 50% of the average salary that was earned the previous year. The proposed valorisation mechanism would require amending the Labour Code. Trade unions are believed to back the proposals, which could come into effect in 2020. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs put forward a decree raising the minimum wage by 12.3% as of January 2019. The increase is widely seen as long overdue; in terms of purchasing power, the country has the fourth-lowest minimum wage in the EU, after Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Denmark

### **New deal on active labour market policy**

*August 23, 2018*

Backed by several political parties, the government has agreed on a proposal for a new (un)employment policy. The plan is to simplify the existing rules and at the same time transfer more responsibility to the unemployment insurance funds, the so-called A-kasse. A-kasse are organisations, which in most cases are linked to trade unions. The organisations offer insurance against unemployment and administer public laws and regulations in that field. With the agreement, the municipalities are given more freedom to organise the efforts, but at the same time, their results are monitored through new benchmarking tools, as well as a better opportunity for sanctions against those municipalities that are not doing well.

Read on: [in Danish ...](#) The text of the agreement: [in Danish ...](#)

### **First assessment of agreement on platform work**

*July 4, 2018*

An Equal Times blog is dedicated an assessment of the collective agreement that trade union 3F (the United Federation of Danish Workers), the largest trade union in the country, signed in April 2018 with Hilfr.dk, a website that provides cleaning services in private homes for around 1,700 customers across the country. Around 450 workers at the online platform for cleaning will benefit from significant guarantees under the signed collective agreement. With the agreement Hilfr domestic cleaners, who were formerly self-employed, become workers and are thereby protected by EU and national labour law.



Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Estonia

### **Increase of minimum wage agreed**

*August 30, 2018*

Trade unions and employers published the bargaining results of a project that has to lead to a minimum wage agreement. The minimum wage negotiation project is based on a model for calculating the minimum wage agreed upon by trade unions and employers. Bargaining regarding the 2019 minimum wage ended at a monthly rate of 540 euro and an hourly 3.21 euro. The organisations have asked their membership for comments before the final signature. The board of the Trade Union Confederation will discuss the minimum wage issue on 25 September, the council of the Employers' Confederation on 19 September.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Teachers will receive higher wages**

*August 29, 2018*

The education minister announced that the monthly minimum wage of teachers will increase to at least 1,250 euro in 2019. This will bring the average wage to at least 1,500 euro. The minister called together a working group that will review measures directed toward teacher training, assess the efficiency of the measures and, if needed, develop new solutions for alleviating the shortage of teachers. The working group will include representatives of various interest groups as well as experts.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Finland

### **Women receive 83 cents for every male euro**

*August 2, 2018*

A national newspaper reports on the issue of equal pay stating that women still only receive 83 cents for every euro that a man earn. The labour markets have compartmentalised most occupations by sex: there are men's jobs and there are women's jobs. Almost without exception 'men's jobs' are paid better than 'women's jobs'. For example, a man who drives an industrial machine receives 800 euro per month more than a nurse who has required the same amount of training to do her job.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Proposal that would put workers under 30 on temporary contracts withdrawn**

*July 24, 2018*

The Central Organisation of Trade Unions SAK is very pleased with the governments' decision to withdraw a planned proposal for amending the Employment Contracts Act by allowing an employer to make, without restrictions, fixed-term employment contracts with anyone under 30 years of age who has been an unemployed job seeker for at least three months. The existing legislation demands a justifiable reason for a fixed-term employment contract. The union insisted that government would withdraw the proposal and other plans to weaken employment security. SAK made clear that otherwise it would go ahead with actions.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## France

### **Air France workers hold on to demands for better wages**

*August 27, 2018*

A cross-union grouping behind earlier strikes that led to the May resignation of the last CEO vowed after a meeting to maintain the core demand for a 5.1% pay increase. During the spring, Air France workers held strikes for 15 days that are estimated to have cost the company 335 million in profits. Air France offered staff

a general wage increase of 7% over four years from 2018 to 2021 in addition to the individual increases of around 1% in 2018. However, unions demand an immediate wage increase of 5.1%, after initially demanding 6%. Union officials declared that if their demands are not met actions will continue in September.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Eiffel tower reopens after strike**

*August 3, 2018*

The Eiffel tower reopened after a two-day strike to protest unacceptably long queues. According to the workers on strike, the reason for the long queues is the new access policy that has seen separate lifts allocated to visitors with pre-booked tickets and those who buy them on site. A spokesperson of trade union CGT stated that the best solution would be to let people, just like before, use the elevator with the shortest queues regardless of the type of ticket that they bought. The tower's operator however doesn't recognise the problem and states that queues are no worse than before, even as visitor numbers have risen significantly.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **French commuters earn less than their neighbours**

*August 2, 2018*

French commuters that work in Luxembourg earn substantially lower wages than their colleagues coming from other neighbouring countries, according to a report that was published by the Luxembourg statistical office Statec. The office has calculated that, in 2017, French border workers receive about € 10,000 less per year than their Belgian colleagues and almost € 7,000 less than their German counterparts. This difference is explained by the fact that they are overrepresented in lower paid activities.

Read on: [in French ...](#)

### **Court comes with first case on right to disconnect**

*August 1, 2018*

A plant of pest control and hygiene company British-owned Rentokil Initial has been ordered to pay a former employee €60,000 after it breached his 'right to disconnect' from work outside of office hours. The Supreme Court found it unfair for the worker, to have to 'permanently leave his telephone on...to respond to requests from his subordinates or customers' in case of any problems while not at work. The worker was fired in 2011 and took the employer to the worker's tribunal, asking for compensation for the extra hours 'on call'. The ruling is the first of its kind since the 2016 law on the right to switch off such electronic devices outside office hours became effective on 1 January 2017.

Read on: [in English ....](#) Assessment of the case: [in French ...](#)

### **Bargaining for nannies**

*July 26, 2018*

In an interesting article, the work of the union for nannies, associated to trade union UNSA, is described. These workers, autonomous, qualified or not, and in many cases more precarious and less protected, often work in isolation. The nannies have serious difficulties with multiple private employers, while the emotional relationship undermines the professional and contractual relationship to servitude. A key issue is the information of nannies, but also of employer parents. The union also develops services to its members and legal assistance in case of difficulties. The aim is to acquire a collective agreement comparable to the agreement for childminders, or even be covered by the same conventional instrument.

Read on: [in French ...](#)

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## **Germany**

### **Bargaining in painters' sector with no result**

*August 29, 2018*

Trade union IG Bau that has been rather successful this summer with its negotiations broke up the talks with the employers in the painters' sector (with around 130,000 workers). The union said that the employers came up with a 'subterranean' proposal. The very meagre proposal that only referred to a wage improvement oriented at the inflation rates (between 2.1 and 2.65%) should run over a period of 29 months. The union has

formulated demands for a 6% pay increase and the improvement of the 13<sup>th</sup> month payment. Also, a first meeting in the frame of mediation ended without result.

Read on: [in German ...](#) [in German \(2\) ...](#) Overview of bargaining results in the industry: [in German ...](#)

### **Gender pay gap per region**

*August 9, 2018*

The statistical office Destatis published the fourth issue of its journal *Wirtschaft und Statistik*. In one article, the results on the adjusted gender pay gap for the sixteen Länder are presented for the first time, including the approach to how they are obtained. The analysis is based on the Structure of Earnings Survey 2014. The method of dividing the pay gap into a statistically explained part and an unexplained part is considered to be the most commonly used method of analysing pay gaps. The Länder results regarding the adjusted gender pay gap in 2014 range between 4.4% in Schleswig-Holstein and 9.3% in Brandenburg. They are significantly lower, with considerably lower dispersion, than the unadjusted pay gap data that are normally published.

Read on: [in German ...](#)

### **Collective bargaining in the first half of 2018**

*July 26, 2018*

The *Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft* (IW) published a research report that describes collective bargaining in the first half of 2018. In addition to pay, the topic of working time was also on the agenda in some negotiations. This report complements the IW conflict barometer, which regularly reports on the intensity of conflict in collective bargaining. The report not only informs about the degree of escalation, but also about the contents of collective bargaining in the first half of 2018.

Read on: [in German ...](#) The report: [in German ...](#)

### **Strikes at supermarket Real**

*July 13, 2018*

According to trade union Verdi, several thousand Real supermarket workers laid down their work in a strike action to protest against cutting wages of new employees. The direct reason for the strike actions was Real management's decision to put aside existing collective agreements with trade union Verdi. Instead of honouring this collective agreement Real is paying newly hired workers a wage that falls under a collective agreement with the DHV union, which is much cheaper for the company. For those affected, this means that on average they will earn 23% less money

Read on: [in German ...](#)

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## **Greece**

### **Seamen plan to strike 3 September**

*August 29, 2018*

The PNO seamen's federation has called a 24-hour strike for 3 September, while the tourist season is still going on. The seamen are protesting the fact that their demands for better pay and improved working conditions were rejected. The association representing the ferry companies urged the union to call off their strike action because it would leave 180.000 passengers stranded. The union rejected a 1% pay increase and is campaigning for a 5% improvement, stating that wages have not been increased in the last 8 years.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Health care sector: impact bailouts have been devastating**

*August 21, 2018*

According to the trade union of public hospital workers (POEDIN), the number of permanent employees at hospitals has been decreased by 25.000 since 2010, when the country signed its first international bailout. Furthermore, there would not be enough doctors on the islands and a lot of the equipment in state hospitals is in serious need of replacement.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Hungary

### **Unions ask for consultations**

*August 16, 2018*

The trade unions are urging consultations about planned staff cuts in public administration. It is unacceptable that the cabinet has announced plans to cut public administration staff by 15-20 percent without proper consultations with the unions concerned and any impact studies carried out.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **European journalists alarmed by pro-government purchase Hír Tv**

*August 3, 2018*

A Hír TV, one of the last independent television broadcasters in the country, is purchased by a pro-government businessman. The station immediately fired several journalists and announced some editorial changes. According to the statement on the channel's website, the television station will return to its 'old values, continuing where it was left in 2015'. The European Federation of Journalists stated that it worries them that media pluralism has been decreasing in the country since the elections in Spring 2018.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **The value of money and why youngsters leave**

*July 22, 2018*

In Budapest, a worker needs to work for almost an hour to earn enough money to buy a Big Mac, according to an UBS international survey. The so-called Big Mac index is an indicator for the purchasing power of an economy and is meant to symbolise the value of local money. The survey works with average salaries and average prices. From all the European cities that were in the survey, the only cities where one would need to work even more for a hamburger (or an iPhone) than in Budapest are Istanbul and Kiev. The results confirm earlier findings from the OECD that only workers in three other OECD-countries earned less per hour. Observers see this as one of the most important reasons for the ongoing leave abroad of youngsters.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) The Big Mac ranking: [in English ...](#)

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## Iceland

### **Union sues whaling company for abuse**

*August 14, 2018*

Trade union Verkalýðsfélag Akraness, that represents manual and unskilled workers, has sued whaling company Hvalur for alleged systematic violations of labour laws. The union argues that the company illegally barred its employees from choosing which union to belong to (see our June newsletter). The union also accuses the whaling company of paying worker less than they were entitled to while also refusing to provide weekly day-off.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Ireland

### **Strike at Lloyd's pharmacies continues**

*August 24, 2018*

After work stoppages earlier in August, workers at the Lloyd's Pharmacy chain say they will escalate their industrial action with three full-day stoppages unless management engages with trade union Mandate. Mandate stated that the company had refused to negotiate with the union. Lloyds Pharmacy said it already negotiated with an in-house Colleague Representative Council. Mandate union represents 220 of the company's 800 retail workers and drivers. The union is demanding a pay increase and incremental pay scales, a sick pay scheme, security of hours with no zero-hour contracts, and improved annual leave and public holiday entitlements.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Draft agreement with Ryanair reached**

*August 23, 2018*

After turbulent weeks with work stoppages and strike threats all over Europe, trade union Fórsa and the Ryanair management reached an agreement in the pilots' dispute after a 22-hour negotiating session. The proposed agreement will go to ballot, with a recommendation for acceptance from Fórsa and its Ryanair pilot representatives. The union has been asked by the mediator to make no public comment while the ballot is conducted. The industrial action resulted this summer in hundreds of flight cancellations. Other European trade unions are watching these talks closely. They seek higher salaries to match those at rival airlines, want to secure employment on local contracts and equalise terms and conditions for the large number of pilots who have been encouraged to work via agencies as contractors, rather than being made employees.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Sector 39 health organisations plan to go on strike**

*July 24, 2018*

After negotiations on their claims for restoration of pay cuts collapsed, Section 39 healthcare organisations (state funded voluntary organisations) are preparing to go on strike on 18 September 2018. Staff in many Section 39 organisations experienced pay cuts similar to those imposed on public service personnel working in State agencies offering similar services after the economic crash. According to trade union Siptu however, unlike public servants working in the health and social care sectors, workers in Section 39 organisations have not yet been offered pay restoration proposals and therefore demands pay restorations.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Low Pay Commission proposes minimum wage increase**

*July 18, 2018*

The Low Pay Commission recommended to the government an increase of the hourly rate of the national minimum wage by 0.25c, from €9.55 to €9.80 per hour. Workers on a 39-hours contract would see their gross wage increase by €9.75 a week under this proposal. The Living Wage Technical Group calculated in June the hourly pay required to afford a socially acceptable standard of living in 2018 by a full-time worker without children at €11.90, an increase of 0.20c per hour on 2017. Trade union confederation ICTU recommends with this argument to align the National Minimum Wage as soon as possible with the Living Wage.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The Low Wage Commission report: [in English ...](#) The Living Wage report: [in English..](#)

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## **Italy**

### **Ryanair agreement approved**

*August 30, 2018*

An agreement over working conditions with Ryanair pilots has been approved. It is the first deal the strike-hit low-cost airline has fully concluded. The agreement that was reached after eight months of talks, gives Italy-based pilots working for Ryanair 'protection and guarantees', according to the ANPAC trade union that negotiated the collective agreement. The deal was submitted for approval to 300 pilot members and accepted with a large majority of votes.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The union statement: [in Italian ...](#)

### **Employment at ILVA steel plant still uncertain**

*August 27, 2018*

Metalworkers trade union FIOM called on the government to clarify its position on the troubled ILVA Taranto steel plant. For the union, it is unthinkable that there can be even one redundancy. ArcelorMittal received a green light for a takeover of ILVA, which is in the hands of government-appointed administrators after being at the centre of environmental scandal linked to high cancer rates in the Taranto area. The labour and industry minister recently said that a revised plan by ArcelorMittal to take over the company was still not good enough in terms of guarantees for the environment and jobs. He said that scrapping the ILVA

tender won by ArcelorMittal was still on the cards. In July 2018, Arcelor said it would support a 'suitable solution' on saving most of the 14,000 plant jobs.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **African harvest workers on strike**

*August 16, 2018*

African migrant harvest workers went to strike to protest at poor working conditions. The strike follows an incident in which 12 non-EU migrant farmworkers died in road crashes. The USB trade union federation called for the strike. According to the local press most of the workers are subject to what is known as a 'caporalato' system of organised, undeclared work. They often earn little more than 1 euro per hour, while the standard wage is six times higher.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Temporary workers demand equal pay**

*August 10, 2018*

Temporary workers of staffing firm Gi Group staged a protest in front of the Lucca office. The workers have been waiting for a year to receive back-pay owed to them. The workers were sent by Gi Group to work at Texsus, a multilayer solutions firm for the Hygienic, Medical, and Industrial market. Trade unions found differences in pay for the temporary workers at Texsus and the other employees of the user undertaking. In some cases, the difference was up to a hundred euro less per month. Gi Group recognised the problem in pay and asked for an official calculation of the amount owed to the temporary workers. However, Gi Group refused immediate pay and talks between Gi Group and the unions have stalled since.

Read on: [in Italian ...](#)

### **Talks at GEA reopened after strike**

*July 12, 2018*

The management of the German-owned GEA plant has agreed to attend talks with trade unions and local government officials over plans by the company to sell its oil and gas refrigeration division in Castel Maggiore. Workers at the plant, who are members of trade union FIOM-CGIL, went on strike in protest at the proposed sale on 10 July. The union wants to safeguard jobs and production at GEA's sizeable plant outside the northern city of Bologna. New talks have to lead to written joint terms of reference on how the sale will take place and how employment can be maintained.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Latvia**

### **Bargaining in hospitality might set minimum wage**

*August 2, 2018*

The Latvian Hotels and Restaurants Association is willing to conclude a general collective agreement on the minimum wage for the employees working in the industry, if the finance ministry lowers the value added tax (VAT) rate on food services to 12%. The National Tripartite Cooperation Council, which brings together representatives of the government, entrepreneurs and trade unions, is expected to discuss VAT on food services. It probably can be lowered only on the condition that the caterers stop paying undeclared wages.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Trade union sets maximum taxi fare**

*July 5, 2018*

Government is planning to set maximum fares for taxi rides, especially around the Riga airport. A government working group is in the process of preparing specific proposals for dealing with the taxicab issue. Meanwhile, the trade union of taxi drivers decided at an extraordinary meeting to set the maximum taxi fare for a ride from Riga International Airport to the city centre at 25 euro and the maximum fare for a ride from the airport to other districts of Riga at 30 euro. The trade union has also issued an appeal to several ministers asking for their support in setting fair taxi fares based on taxicab services' actual costs.



Read on: [in English ...](#)

## **Collective agreement on minimum wages in construction**

*July 4, 2018*

A collective agreement on minimum wage in construction industry has been signed so far by 211 companies, whose construction works make up 641 million euro - that is 90% of the minimum amount for the collective agreement to come into force. The Latvian Partnership of Building Contractors said that this support demonstrates a paradigm shift and that businessmen want fair competition in the construction industry. The collective agreement on minimum wage is the most important reform in the construction industry since the restoration of independence. The bargaining continued for 2.5 years and, in order to come into force, it must be signed by companies with a total result of construction works of 713 million.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Liechtenstein**

### **Trade union advocates work-life balance**

*July 9, 2018*

Trade union LANV formulates in its journal a plea for a work-life balance policy, i.e. the time individuals need for a better allocation between work and other aspects of life. LANV quotes results of a survey carried out by the Liechtenstein-Institut on the necessary family policy, with proposed measures that range from improved parental leave to a more adequate organisation of part-time work and lowering of work pressure.

Read on: [in German ...](#) The Report: [in German...](#)

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## **Lithuania**

### **Gender pay gap documented**

*August 27, 2018*

Data and figures released by Statistics Lithuania underpin that men's gross monthly wages exceeded those of women by almost 140 euro on average in the second quarter of 2018. The statistics show women's average monthly gross wages at 857 euro, or 86 % of men's average gross wages of 996.8 euro. Women's net wages, at 674 euro, accounted for 87.6 % of men's net wages, at 769.8 euro on average. Earlier in July, the office provided data on 2017 that demonstrate an increasing gender pay gap.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\): ...](#)

### **Dispute over closing shops on holidays and Sundays**

*August 22, 2018*

Retailers and trade unions tentatively agreed that workers at large chains will get days off on Christmas and Easter. The Association of Lithuanian Trade Companies wants this agreement to cover all retailers, not only large chains. Furthermore, the companies stated that they in principle agree to the proposal to keep stores closed for two days a year, but they do not want that list to be expanded in the future. Trade unions, on the other side, want shop workers to be free on all official holidays and at least one Sunday a month.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Luxembourg**

### **Negotiations at Credem bank stalled**

*August 13, 2018*

Trade unions ALEBA, LCGB-SESF and OGBL-SBA and the bank Credem International have failed to reach an agreement on a social plan for the employees after the bank announced the closure of its Luxembourg branch. According to the unions, the bank's proposal was below what is applied in similar situations and did



not even correspond to a quarter of what is customary in the country's banking sector. It is now up to the state conciliation office (ONC), responsible for arbitration when no agreement is reached, to act.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Wage indexation will be applied**

*August 8, 2018*

The statistical office Statec announced an increase by 2.5% of the wages through a new round of indexation. The indexation keeps earnings in line with inflation. According to provisional results, the annual inflation index stood at 1.5% in July 2018, which, in turn, increased the average bi-annual index rate. The adaptation of the of the wages, salaries and pensions will enter into force on 1 August. Final and detailed results of the national consumer price index for July were published on 8 August.

Read on: [in English ...](#) Read the Bulletin: [in French ...](#)

### **Act on minimum income approved**

*July 30, 2018*

The Chambre des Députés, the country's parliament, approved a new act that introduces a social inclusion income scheme (REVIS). The scheme will replace the current guaranteed minimum income (RMG, Revenu Minimum Garanti). The final text of the act was published on 30 July 2018; the act enters into force in January 2019, with some 20,000 people (4,000 households) affected. The act is to be assessed by 2022.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The Act: [in French ...](#)

### **Construction workers take to the streets**

*July 7, 2018*

In the middle of a collective bargaining dispute in the construction industry, workers organised two rallies to support demands for more wages and better working conditions. The last collective agreement expired in 2016 and for the new agreement workers and their union are demanding an increase of 4.5% in real wages. Some 3,000 workers took part in two demonstrations in order to stand up for their collective agreement. The unions have called for mediation by the national mediation office ONC that is in charge of resolving collective disputes on working conditions, as well as settling collective labour conflicts during bargaining.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in German ...](#)

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## **Malta**

### **Industrial action by nurses**

*July 6, 2018*

The Union of Midwives and Nurses called for a day of industrial action at Mater Dei and other hospitals, health centres and elderly homes following a breakdown of negotiations with the government on a new sectoral agreement. They were joined by nursing aides and other health workers, who were called by the General Workers' Union not to perform tasks usually carried out under the supervision of a nurse.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Netherlands**

### **Industrial action security Schiphol leads to deal**

*August 29, 2018*

Security workers at international airport Schiphol acted against a wage offer of 0% pay increase and high work pressure. After several short work stoppages, they announced to go on a 24-hour strike on 4 September. The strike action would mean that no flights could be landing or departing from Schiphol that day. Schiphol considered to prevent the strike in court. However, the strike could be called off after a late-night agreement was concluded between the trade unions and the airport management. The 4,000 strong

workforce will receive a one-off pay rise of 700 euro in 2018 and a 5% wage increase over 2019 and 2020. There is also agreement about measures to bring down work pressure and introduce shorter working hours.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Collective agreement applies to Polish and Moldavian workers IKEA subcontractor**

*August 23, 2018*

IKEA contracts Brinkman to transport some of its goods, who in turn subcontract much of these transport operations to sister-companies based in Eastern Europe. These companies in the East employ drivers on Eastern European contracts, despite working continuously in Western Europe. Trade union FNV went to court to appeal the case and the court ruled that the Dutch salaries in the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) also apply to subcontracted workers from Poland and Moldova.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Public transport deal might be controversial**

*July 2, 2018*

Trade unions and employers agreed a deal in principle on public transport workers' pay. The trade unions suspended a strike that affected most bus routes and a number of regional train services, after saying they were close to an agreement with employers' organisation VWOV. The unions asked a 3.5% pay increase for their 12,000 members as well as a number of measures to reduce work pressure, such as extra breaks. The draft deal, running from 1 January 2018 to 1 July 2020, includes a 2.5% pay increase on 1 August 2018, 1.5% on 1 January 2019, 2% on 1 August 2019 and 1.5% on 1 January 2020. Moreover, an on-off payment is paid on 1 August 2018 (550 euro) and 1 January 2020 (100 euro). The deal that is seen as controversial has to be presented to the union members for approval.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in Dutch ...](#)

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## **Norway**

### **Long strike results in collective agreement Orona**

*August 3, 2018*

After eight weeks of strike workers at Orona, the 5th largest elevator company in Europe, won their fight for a collective agreement. Orona finally agreed to the trade union's demands to stop subcontracting workers with lower salaries for temporary work. Elevator mechanics wanted to conclude a collective bargaining agreement which would bring working conditions up to industry standards. After the company refused to negotiate, workers went on strike in May. Nearly three months later, the strike has ended with an agreement between the union and Orona, with the last round of negotiations lasting for 13 hours.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Oil workers on strike**

*July 19, 2018*

Hundreds of offshore oil and gas rigs workers went on strike 10 July 2018 after rejecting a proposed wage deal. When negotiations with unions broke down the conflict intensified with new industrial actions in which some 1550 workers participated. This led to the shutdown of a Shell-operated oilfield with a daily output of 23,900 barrels of mostly oil. Later on, a deal was reached, with the help of mediation, and the strikes ended.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

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## **Poland**

### **Pilots consider to join strikes at Ryanair**

*August 11, 2018*

The European Cockpit Association (ECA) that represents more than 38,000 Ryanair pilots from national associations across 36 countries seeks to counter concerns that Ryanair might transfer hundreds of jobs to countries less welcoming to unions. The low-cost carrier had stated its intention to transfer a fifth of its Irish

fleet to Poland, supposed to be a country with limited pilot union representation, as part of the dispute over pay and working conditions. However, the move could lose relevance as pilots in Poland have announced plans to join the European-wide protests.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [In English ...](#)

### **Strike looms in public services**

*August 7, 2018*

Trade union Solidarity has threatened that workers will go on strike this autumn unless public servants' salaries are raised. The union made this announcement before a meeting that was scheduled between the prime minister and the union's leaders. According to the union the economy is going well, the GDP is growing and workers want to feel this GDP growth in their pockets.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **More rights for workers with civil law contract**

*July 27, 2018*

Due to new legislation, workers that are employed using more flexible, task-based 'civil law contracts' will be entitled to join or form trade unions and to benefit from protection previously reserved only for trade union members. Civil law contracts are not regulated by the Labour Code and are more flexible than conventional employment agreements. Until now, civil law workers were not covered by the Act on Trade Unions.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Portugal**

### **Nurses plan national strike in September**

*August 30, 2018*

All six nurses' trade unions agreed to call out a national strike on 20 and 21 September. The strike actions are held after demands regarding status, pay and working hours that were presented exactly a year ago continuously failed to result in action by the government. The six unions had a meeting scheduled to analyse an expected Government proposal, but in the absence of the document, the meeting was used to coordinate protests. Earlier in August, a five-days strike had an impressive participation with around 35,000 of a total of 40,000 nurses across the country that joined the strike.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\)...](#)

### **Dockworkers start protests**

*August 16, 2018*

Dockworkers started a four-week overtime strike due to end on 10 September, in a protest called by the Stevedore and Logistics Activity Union (SEAL). The strike covers all overtime work, in other words all the work that exceeds normal working hours or daily working hours on business days, and all work on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The reason for the strike is the increasing proliferation of anti-union practices in several ports, which is extremely severe in the port of Leixões and continues to be severe in the port of Caniçal. The trade union accuses port companies of 'criminal behaviour' including moral harassment from persecution to duress, from bribery to discrimination, dismissal threats and salary blackmail, to turning workers against each other and to prevent them from free and conscious unionisation.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **A series of actions at the rail**

*August 16, 2018*

Railway maintenance workers are on strike. The protest against staff shortages and lack of reinforcements was called by the National Independent Union of Railways. Meanwhile, the main rail workers trade union federation Fectrans called a strike for 3 October in view of what it called a lack of investment and staff cuts in the sector. On 24 October, a 'Road Forum' event is to be held with the aim of bringing together rail workers, customers, technicians and specialists organisations to reflect on the current situation in the sector.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Union formulates pay table for outsourcer**

*August 7, 2018*

Trade union SINTTAV formulated pay demands for RHmais, one of the country's biggest recruitment and outsourcing firms. RHmais is active for large public and private companies in various sectors. In the last few years, there have been no salary increases other than those resulting from the changes to the National Minimum Wage. As a result, the practice of low wages continues, which translates into the successive decrease of purchasing power. The union elaborated a table with wage scales for categories of workers, considering years of service, and formulated additional bonuses for, for instance, language skills.

The demands: [in Portuguese ...](#)

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## **Romania**

### **Employers' responses to labour shortages**

*August 13, 2018*

The recovery after the crisis, as well as the massive migration of workers to Western European countries, has generated the largest labour shortage in recent history. Employers are considering to offer improved wage packages – including higher salaries and bonuses, and other benefits such as health insurance, private pensions or profit-sharing – or to look for workers from outside. According to the 2018 Randstad Monitor, employers are willing to consider 15% higher wages to attract talent. More than two-thirds (71%) of the companies plan to hire for permanent jobs, and most of the available positions are in sales, production and IT. However, in hospitality, manufacturing, industry, agriculture, construction and services foreign workers from non-EU countries are hired with poor working and living standards.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in Romanian: ...](#)

### **Protest for better wages at Tenaris steel factory**

*August 10, 2018*

Hundreds of workers at Tenaris steel factory participated in a number of rallies organised to demand better wages. Collective bargaining with the management has been going on since May 2018 but there's still no deal in sight. So far, the employer's offer is to raise salaries between RON 100 (20 euro) and RON 200 (40 euro), while the union demands are between RON 250 (50 euro) and RON 350 (75 euro) for each worker. Tenaris Silcotub, which is part of Italian group Tenaris, has almost 2,000 employees in Romania. The company currently pays most of its employees the minimum wage, some RON 1,200 (260 euro) net monthly.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English ...](#)

### **Sport sector workers on strike**

*August 8, 2018*

Sport sector workers are unhappy with the pay system and the lack of staff in the sector. Thousands of employees in units subordinated to the Ministry of Youth and Sports and national sports federations therefore decided to go on strike. The National Sports and Youth Union (SNTS) claims that people with similar jobs in institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Youth and Sports get different salaries, and is demanding equal pay.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## **Serbia**

### **Social-economic council talks about minimum wage**

*August 27, 2018*

A working group of the Social-Economic Council started negotiations on minimal wage for 2019. The trade unions formulated their demands; they ask for minimum wage at RSD 209 per working hour and for the minimum monthly wage to be increased by RSD 11,000. On the other hand, employers offer a 6-7% raise. The union said that it should be quite normal that nobody accepts to work for less than 300 euro per month

(around RSD 36,000). The current hourly minimum wage is RSD 143 and the minimum monthly wage is RSD 24,800.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Slovakia

### **Workers at Volkswagen plant file legal action against management**

*July 16, 2018*

Employees of Volkswagen's plant in Martin are filing a legal action against management, saying that it discriminates against employees at the Martin-based factory by not paying them a monthly 30-euro compensation benefits for transport and accommodation. In contrast, the compensation that is part of the collective agreement is paid at the other Volkswagen's plants in the country. Modern Trade Union Volkswagen has therefore prepared, in collaboration with employees in the Martin factory, the materials necessary to file a mass action against the company management.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Slovenia

### **New collective agreement hospitality sector**

*August 8, 2018*

A new collective agreement in the hospitality sector has prevented a strike at the peak of the tourist season. In the collective agreement workers have won a yearly holiday bonus of 1000 euro. Overtime was also an issue that was addressed during the negotiations. Under the new agreement employers will now have to analyse overtime every three months to see if it exceeds 5% of the average working time and if so, take measures to address the issue. Excessive overtime will have to be used up within six months or employers will have to pay a 30-50% bonus for the overtime, depending on how long it takes them to pay it out.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

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## Spain

### **Union brings cloud firm to court**

*August 6, 2018*

Trade union UGT initiated a class action lawsuit against Barcelona-based human cloud food courier firm Glovo, with the intention of 'combating the precarious work system'. The union says it wants to demonstrate the fraudulent relationship between Glovo and the workers and added that the majority of Glovo's dismissed workers claim that the company does not act as an 'intermediary' and instead imposes its own working conditions. According to the union, the firm refuses to establish itself as an ordinary intermediary and thus not has to assume the fiscal and social responsibilities that every company is obliged to comply with.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in Spanish ...](#)

### **Taxi drivers strike to oppose Uber**

*August 2, 2018*

A national six-day taxi driver strike to protest unfair competition by platform concurrent Uber ended after the government agreed to pass regulation that will allow the country's autonomous communities to cap the number of private hire vehicle permits within their cities. Taxi associations have suspended their strike but stated that they are willing to mobilise again to keep up the pressure on the legislator.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Workers quantum mine on strike**

*July 27, 2018*

Around 85% of the workers at quantum mine Cobre Las Cruces went on strike in demand for the payment of 'toxic bonuses' (pay for work that is particularly dangerous) for subcontractors. In addition to the strike a picket line was organised at the entrance of the mine. According to the company's website, expected annual production averages 72,000 tonnes of copper which makes for 25% of the country's internal demand.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

## **More temporary jobs converted into permanent employment**

*July 23, 2018*

Randstad Spain published an analysis of the development of temporary work. It shows that the number of temporary contracts that were converted to permanent contracts stood at 407,900 in the first half of 2018, up 17.7% from the same period last year and the highest figure since 2008. The services sector recorded the most conversions with 303,172 temporary contracts converted to permanent contracts. This was followed by construction (61,530), industry (31,579) and agriculture (11,705). In the industrial sector, more than half, or 50.9%, of permanent contracts was converted from a fixed term contract.

Read the analysis: [in Spanish ...](#)

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## **Sweden**

### **Employment data halfway 2018**

*August 28, 2018*

The statistical office SCB published its quarterly with labour market data for the first half of 2018. The report (in Swedish, but with an English summary) reveals that the employment rate, that is, the proportion of employed persons in the population, continued to increase in the second quarter of 2018 and came at the level of 68.7%; an increase of 0.6 percentage points compared with the same period in 2017. Although unemployment among youngsters is decreasing, it stays at a high level in the age group of 15-24 (20.6%).

The Swedish Report: [in English ...](#)

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## **Switzerland**

### **Unions against EU deal that 'undermines wages'**

*August 10, 2018*

The country's Federal Council decided in July to consult the cantons and the trade unions on a proposed treaty with the European Union that includes labour reforms. The trade union federation SGB/USS refused to participate in the discussions on easing measures for wages and working conditions as part of the framework negotiations with the EU. The trade union is angry about the mandate that has been given to the economy ministry and fears that the measures to change the free movement of people in accordance with EU regulations will put pressure on wage protections.

Read on: [in English \(1\) ... in English \(2\) ... in German \(1\) ...](#)

### **Minimum pay for hospitality concluded**

*July 7, 2018*

The negotiators in hospitality, trade unions Unia, Syna and Hotel&Gastro Union and the employers' organisations GastroSuisse and Swiss Catering Association, finalised their annual pay bargaining and settled a new minimum wage in the sector. The minimum wages in the hospitality industry will increase by 1 to 1.3% from 1 January 2019. Currently, an unskilled worker in hospitality earns a monthly pay of 3435 Swiss Francs (3045 euro). On 1 January 2019, this will increase to 3470 Swiss Francs (3076 euro).

The joint press statement: [in German...](#) [in French...](#) [in Italian...](#)

### **Strike at Tamedia suspended after canton offers to mediate**

*July 5, 2018*

Workers at the countries' largest French-language daily tabloid 'Le Matin', went on strike to protest the recently-announced winding down of the printed version of the tabloid that is owned by Tamedia.



Journalists from the paper, as well as other Tamedia-owned publications, demanded that the closure be overturned and that the associated job cuts (36, of which 22 editorial staff) be reversed. The strike was suspended following a successful offer of mediation by canton Vaud authorities

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Protecting migrant labour's pay**

*July 5, 2018*

Trade union Unia published a brochure that describes the trade union's migration and labour market policy from the beginning to the present day. It combines historical facts and political analysis. The quota policy of the past led to the inhumane exploitation of immigrant workers and widespread wage dumping. Therefore, the unions have always backed up the free movement of persons. In addition to the free movement of persons, the country's flanking measures serve to protect wages and working conditions. However, only where minimum wages exist the workers' pay can be protected. That is why, above all, more collective agreements with minimum wages are needed to ensure that such wages apply in all sectors.

The report: [in German...](#) [in French...](#)

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## Turkey

### **Long strike at Süperpak continues**

*August 10, 2018*

Workers of a MM Süperpak Ambalaj factory in Izmir are on strike since late June. Management shows bad faith by refusing to meet while pressuring union members to quit the union. MM Süperpak Ambalaj is a subsidiary of Austrian-based Mayr-Melnhof, with operations in Izmir, Karaman and Gaziantep. Around 250 workers from trade union Selüloz-İş have been on strike since rejecting a pay offer of zero wage rise on 20 June. Collective bargaining negotiations at the three plants started on January 26 for the 2018-19 period. Of the 74 articles in the CBA, 50 were agreed. However, pay remains the main conflict.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Yves Rocher under critique**

*August 9, 2018*

Yves Rocher was harshly criticised after the company laid off workers on the grounds that they had joined a trade union. The workers produce cosmetics for the Flormar brand, which is owned by the French multinational. On the 84th day of a picket outside the gates of the factory of Flormar, security forces intervened in an attempt to end the resistance of the 132 dismissed workers. An online petition that calls on Yves Rocher to reinstate the workers has so far collected 107,653 signatures. A film tells their story.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#) The film and petition: [in English ...](#)

### **Court calls strike ban violation of fundamental right**

*August 2, 2018*

The Constitutional Court ruled that the cabinet decree banning the United Metalworkers' Union (Birleşik Metal-İş) decision to strike in 2015 is a clear violation of the trade union rights enshrined in the constitution, and that national security was invoked arbitrarily. The Court also ruled the government to pay compensation to Birleşik Metal-İş. The union took the case to the Constitutional Court, after administrative courts and the Council of State did not accept its appeal. According to the country's Constitution, after all ordinary legal remedies are exhausted, 'everyone may apply to the Constitutional Court on the grounds that one of the fundamental rights and freedoms within the scope of the European Convention on Human Rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution has been violated by public authorities'.

Read on: [in English ...](#) The union news: [in English ...](#)

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## United Kingdom

### **More railway strikes to be expected**



August 31, 2018

Rail workers on South Western Railway (SWR) began a three-day strike in a long-running dispute over the role of guards on trains. Network Rail is facing more strikes in September if negotiations fail. The walkout is the sixth of eight planned strikes across the summer - the previous five were all for 24 hours. Trade union RMT is asking for a guarantee of guards on trains and a halt to the 'rolling out of driver-only operation'.

Read on: [in English ...](#) [in English \(2\) ...](#)

### **Cleaners ministry London demand living wages**

August 7, 2018

Cleaners at the Ministry of Justice have picketed the Ministry and the offices of a west London council as they began a three-day strike over poor pay and conditions. They are striking in demand of an occupational sick pay scheme and parity of terms and conditions with directly employed staff and are calling for the London living wage. The migrant workers are represented by the United Voices of the World trade union.

Read on: [in English ...](#)

### **Older workers and a better work-life balance**

July 17, 2018

The Women and Equalities Committee, a committee appointed by the House of Commons, published a report on older people and employment. The report concludes that the talents of more than a million people aged over 50 who want to work are being wasted because of discrimination, bias and outdated employment practices. It also concludes that Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission are failing to enforce the law on age discrimination. The report says women tend to be hardest hit by the lack of flexibility offered by companies for older workers when many people over the age of 50 need to reduce their working hours to care for loved ones. It called on the government to introduce a statutory entitlement for five days' paid leave for carers, and a longer period of unpaid leave, to help older workers balance work with caring.

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### **Back-pay decision for on-call work reversed**

July 13, 2018

The Court of Appeal reversed a decision that workers should receive the minimum wage during sleep-ins. It ruled in a case brought by disability charity Mencap that social care workers should be considered to be 'working' only during the hours they spend awake, despite the fact that those required to sleep at the homes of service users must be on-call during the night and are thus prevented from acting as if they were 'off work'. A court had ruled in 2017 that care workers should be paid the national minimum wage for every hour of a sleep-in shift, rather than a flat rate - in effect doubling the cost of a shift to £60. It had said providers should be liable for six years of back-pay to carers. The Court of Appeal reversed this back-pay decision.

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### **New record of underpayment**

July 6, 2018

The latest list of employers who underpaid the National Living and Minimum Wage contains the names of 239 employers found to have underpaid 22,400 UK workers by a total of £1.44m. The list identified more underpaid workers than in any previous single naming list. Employers underpaid workers by taking deductions from wages for uniforms, underpaying apprentices, failing to pay travel time, misusing the accommodation offset and using the wrong time periods for calculating pay.

The reported underpayment: [in English ...](#)

### **Pay increase beneficial for all**

July 4, 2018

A study, commissioned by trade union Unite, concluded that an increase of the minimum hourly wage to £10 for workers over the age of 18 would generate £5.6 million a year for the public purse. The report took into account in its calculation increased tax receipts and national insurance contributions, as well as decreased state expenditure on in-work benefits. The researcher said that over three-quarters (78%) of young workers aged 18-20 would receive a pay rise if £10 became the statutory hourly minimum. Their net average income

would increase by over £1,300 a year. A majority of workers in lower income sectors would benefit from the increase, including three-quarters of hospitality workers and two-thirds of retail workers.

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You may find further information on the ETUI at [www.etui.org](http://www.etui.org), and on the AIAS at [www.uva-aias.net](http://www.uva-aias.net).

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