

Spanish lorry drivers continue strike against rising fuel prices due to US/NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine; tens of thousands join one-day strike in France to demand wage rises and cuts in energy prices; Clover dairy workers continue nationwide strike in South Africa demanding nationalisation as unions offer concessions; South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners' pay strike may spread to platinum mines

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

24 March 2022

The World Socialist Web Site invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature.

Spanish lorry drivers' strike against rising fuel prices continues

The national strike of approximately 75,000 lorry drivers in Spain, begun on March 14, continued this week, having an impact on the entire supply chain. The stoppage of mainly self-employed drivers and small companies was called by the Platform for the Defence of Road Transport of Merchandise in response to the rising price of fuel as a result of the war in Ukraine.

The Platform demanded a minimum fee for road delivery it says would prevent the large companies from pricing out independent drivers and smaller firms. Other demands include improvements to working conditions such as early retirement, a prohibition on drivers loading and unloading their own vehicles, and safety improvements to rest areas. The Socialist Party/Podemos government repeatedly refused to negotiate with the Platform or striking drivers, opening negotiations instead with the National Committee on Road Transport, which represents larger companies and opposes the strike.

Over 23,000 police officers have been deployed by the government, and in the first ten days of the stoppage, the police reported arresting 61 strikers according to *el Periódico*. Last week a driver on the picket line was hospitalised after being shot by an undercover police officer.

The trade unions bitterly opposed the strike. In comments to *Europa Press*, spokespeople for the Workers' Commissions (CCOO) and General Workers' Union (UGT) said "the mobilisations do not fit into the regulations that regulate the exercise of a fundamental right such as the right to strike," and pointed out that salaried drivers were not able to join the strikes as there was no legal strike notice.

Salaried drivers are in fact blocked from joining the strike by the unions themselves, which have not issued any legal notice allowing them to refuse to cross picket lines. This is despite the government's attacks on the conditions of drivers not involved in the strike. It voted on Tuesday to extend the maximum working hours for drivers from nine hours a day to 11 hours, and reduce statutory rest times by two hours, *La Provincia* reported.

National strike and demonstrations in France over the cost of living

On March 17, tens of thousands of workers throughout France joined a one-day strike and multiple demonstrations over the rising cost of living.

According to *Le Figaro*, the unions report 80,000 people joined demonstrations in cities across France, while the police report around 31,000. Most major French unions called the strike to demand an increase in wages and a cut in VAT on fuel and energy as the war in Ukraine drives up prices, with inflation reaching 3.6 percent in February, the highest level since 2008.

French healthcare workers strike over pay and conditions

Widespread strikes and protests continued this week in the French healthcare system, where workers are demanding improvements in their pay and working conditions, often working long hours with inadequate staffing levels.

On Monday, drivers working for Harmonie Ambulance in Maine-et-Loire began a three-day strike to demand an 18 percent pay rise for

auxiliary ambulance workers. They are paid the minimum wage, 50 cents per hour less than state-certified paramedics, *Ouest France* reported. The strike is a grassroots movement of thirty of the fifty drivers, independent of the unions.

A spokesperson for the French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT) told *Ouest France* that they opposed the strike as they agreed with the company's policy that there should be a one-euro wage difference between auxiliary ambulance workers and certified paramedics "to encourage them to pursue training and become certified paramedics."

Harmonie Ambulance is part of the VYV Group, France's largest health insurer, which runs many hospitals and medical services. While opposing the strike of ambulance workers, the CFDT and other unions called a partial strike this Thursday at all companies in the VYV Group to demand a five percent pay rise. According to the Fitch credit rating agency, the non-insurance operations of the VYV Group currently run at a loss, but workers confront the company's stated objective to make them profitable by 2024-25.

Hospital cleaners at the Private Hospital of the Loire in the city of Saint-Étienne began an indefinite strike Tuesday, demanding improved wages and conditions, and denouncing the disrespect with which they are treated.

According to *Le Progrès*, one major demand is equal hours for workers on fixed term contracts, who must complete their tasks in half an hour less than permanent employees, which means the quality of cleaning is compromised.

Speaking to *France Bleu*, one striker said, "They don't even call us by our first names, they call us Samsic," after the company the cleaning service is outsourced to, the Samsic group, whose website reports a revenue of 2.6 billion euros.

Hungarian teachers strike and join mass protests over pay, conditions and the right to strike

Teachers in Hungary held a three-day strike last week, and joined students in mass demonstrations, including a large protest outside the parliament building.

Hungarian teachers have been holding strikes and protests since February 1 to demand improvements in their pay and workload. They are also defending the right to strike, after schools punished strikers and the government imposed onerous legal requirements on any stoppages and repeatedly attempted to get court rulings declaring the strikes illegal.

According to official figures, 16,000 teachers stopped work last week, despite the threat of reprisals at work or in the courts. According to the Teachers' Union (PSZ) this is an underestimate, *Nepszava* reported. The government continued to denounce the strikes, urging the unions to follow the example of the Drivers' Union, which called off a pay strike at the Hungarian State Railways citing the war in Ukraine. The PSZ and Teachers' Democratic Union announced that the industrial action would escalate after the parliamentary elections on April 3, and *Napi* reported that the indefinite strike continued into this week.

Sacked workers at Xiaomi-Salcomp, Turkey in jobs protest

Workers fired from the Xiaomi-Salcomp electronics factory in Istanbul, Turkey, protested and held a press conference outside the factory on Wednesday, denouncing the company's announcement it was downsizing and cutting 110 jobs after it had received large amounts of state aid.

Evrensel, the fired workers according with the Türk union, but were told their union would not support them if they called for industrial action and were given "justifications for the employer's excuse." In their press statement the dismissed workers demand the rehiring of those who want to return, and severance pay for others, many of whom were fired one or two days before they became eligible.

Last August, Xiaomi-Salcomp workers began a strike which lasted nearly a month after colleagues who joined Türk Metal were fired, as well as those who protested in support. The company agreed to rehire everyone sacked for joining the union and gave Türk Metal a seat at the table in collective negotiations.

Bus drivers in Limburg, Belgium strike over workload despite union back-to-work order

Bus drivers at the state-owned De Lijn in the Belgian province of Limburg continued a strike last Friday begun the previous day, despite the union telling drivers to return to work.

According to *Het Nieuwsblad*, a strike began on Thursday at the Kinrooi depot, and the unions began negotiations with the management, announcing the same day that they had reached an agreement to relieve workload caused by a staff shortage. A spokesman for the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (ACV) said the agreement "was distributed on Thursday with the call not to strike." When work did not resume the next day, the ACV said, "It is the employees who are on strike, the unions called for them not to strike."

On the second day, workers at the nearby Lanaken depot joined their colleagues in Kinrooi.

Staff and students at Belgian college strike over lack of resources

On Tuesday, workers at the Haute École de la Province de Liège (HEPL) college in Belgium held a one-day strike to oppose the lack of resources for teaching, following a previous walkout in December.

RTBF reported that teachers and students marched together to the office of the Provincial Deputy in charge of education. They quoted the president of the Federation of French-speaking Students (FEF) that there were physiotherapy students who had to work on the floor and lacked training mannequins.

According to the FEF, the HEPL, which mainly offers bachelors courses in technical and medical subjects, has increased student numbers by 1,300 in five years to around 10,000, cutting staff numbers by 45 in the same period.

Unions end indefinite strike of bus drivers in Cyprus over jobs and conditions

Bus drivers in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia returned to work Thursday after voting to suspend an indefinite strike in the second vote of the week.

Drivers in Nicosia and the city of Larnaca walked out on Friday last week, after 36 Cyprus Public Transport workers were handed redundancy notices. Strikers demanded improved working conditions, pointing to busy schedules with insufficient break times.

The unions agreed on Saturday to suspend the strike in return for the withdrawal of redundancies, but this was rejected that afternoon by a vote of members and the strike continued. In a second vote on Tuesday, drivers in Larnaca voted to suspend the strike during talks between the unions and government officials. After the transport minister said he would only negotiate with the unions in Nicosia if they suspended the strike, the suspension was also approved on Wednesday.

Local government workers in Northern Ireland strike over pay offer

Local government staff at all 11 Northern Ireland (NI) local authorities began a week's strike on Monday. Education Authority, NI Housing Executive and staff at several colleges also walked out.

The Unite union members rejected a derisory 1.75 percent pay rise, following an 11-year pay freeze. The workers at the different authorities and bodies voted by big majorities, in most cases by more than 90 percent for the action.

Striking Coventry refuse drivers in England hold protest march over suspended shop steward

Striking refuse collection lorry drivers at Labour-run Coventry council held a protest march Tuesday, and handed in a petition with 11,000 signatures calling for the reinstatement of Unite shop steward, Peter Randle. Randle was suspended by Coventry council two weeks ago on what Unite says are bogus charges.

The 70 UK refuse collection lorry drivers, who began all-out strike on January 31, recently voted by a 94 percent margin to continue their stoppage. They had to rebalot as the mandate for the current action runs out on March 24. All-out action could run into the summer, including the period of the May local authority elections, beginning March 28.

The Unite union members voted by a 98.5 percent majority to strike in the current dispute. The Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) drivers' pay starts at just £22,183 a year. It takes 11 years of service to reach the top of the pay scale. There is a UK-wide shortage of HGV drivers, and some councils increased pay or made retention payments to keep refuse collection drivers.

Coventry council hired a replacement scab workforce, mobilised through its wholly owned arms-length company, Tom White Waste.

Indefinite pay strike continues by Chep pallet production workers in Greater Manchester, England

The stoppage by around 70 UK workers at Chep in Trafford Park, Greater Manchester, continues. The indefinite strike began on December 17, after workers rejected a 1 percent pay offer.

The Chep workers recently rebalotted to continue the strike, with 94 percent in favour. The Unite union members, who make pallets for companies like Heinz and Heineken, are paid £1,000 less than workers at other Chep sites. Trafford Park workers voted 75 percent to strike against a 2 percent offer. The union put in for 5 percent, which with inflation at 7.8 percent and rising would be a wage cut.

Chep, part of supply chain company the Brambles with headquarters in

Australia, recorded profits of £150 million last year. Twenty-four-hour picketing Monday to Friday at the Manchester site is ongoing.

UK confectionery workers in York strike over pay and conditions

Dozens of UK workers at Fox's sweet factory in York walked out at 5pm on Monday, mid-shift. The strike was due to last until Thursday, and a demonstration is planned for March 28.

Fox makes well-known brands including Glacier Mints, Mint Humbugs and Poppets. The parent company is Irish-based multinational Valeo Foods, which has a Yorkshire headquarters in Pontefract and another factory in Cleckheaton.

The GMB members are protesting a below-inflation pay offer. Also, the lowest paid workers were excluded from a one-off payment, others stand to lose two days leave, and the company gave notice to end collective bargaining at the site.

The workers twice rejected the pay offer from Fox, who have refused to improve it despite making an improved offer at its Pontefract site

Refuse collectors in Sussex, England continue strike over pay

Around 60 UK refuse collectors, street cleaners and recycling workers in Adur and Worthing in Sussex are continuing their strike begun March 14. Originally called for two weeks, the strike was extended for another two weeks after a scab lorry struck a picket on the first day of the stoppage.

The GMB union members voted by 100 percent majority on a 90 percent turnout to walk out for higher pay. The employer is refusing to negotiate with GMB, claiming they only recognise the Unison union.

Car parts workers in County Durham, UK strike over pay

Around 200 UK workers at the NSK Bearings and AKS Precision Ball in Peterlee held a one-day strike Wednesday. They will walk out every Wednesday and Saturday for the next five weeks.

The Unite union members rejected a 1.6 percent pay offer. The two factory sites are owned by NSK Europe, which made an £80 million profit in the last financial year. The sites make bearings for car manufacturers including Renault, Toyota and VW.

UK university academic staff in further industrial action over pay, pensions and conditions

Following 10 days of strikes at nearly 70 higher education institutions across the UK in February and early March, academic staff at 39 universities were on strike from Monday until Friday. From March 28 to April 1, a strike will affect 29 universities.

Among the universities taking part in the first tranche of renewed strikes are Cambridge, Durham, Glasgow, Leeds, Newcastle and Salford.

University management aims to cut already devalued pensions by

another 35 percent, attack pay and working conditions, and extend casualisation. The cuts are on top of £240,000 already lost from the average lecturer's retirement income over the past decade.

The Universities Superannuation Scheme's joint negotiating committee (JNC) recently imposed massive attacks on pensions, meaning workers in the higher education sector losing tens of thousands of pounds. The JNC—comprising five employers' representatives, five from the University and College Union (UCU) and a chair—was set up in 2018 and was presented by the union as a concession from the employers to justify the 2018 pensions dispute sell-out.

Teachers at Forest School in London strike over threats to impose inferior contracts

Teachers at Forest School, an independent day school in the London borough of Waltham Forest, held a two-day strike this week to protest management's attempts to impose inferior contracts under threat of "fire and rehire."

The National Education Union (NEU) members walked out previously over threats to withdraw them from the Teacher Pension Scheme. The school withdrew this threat. The teachers were recently awarded a below-inflation five percent pay rise.

In a separate dispute, teachers at South Chingford school in Waltham Forest held a second three-day strike this week over workloads and compulsory redundancies. Last week, the NEU members began a programme of three-day strikes.

Strike of teachers at Pocklington School, UK over pension threat

UK teachers at independent (private) Pocklington School, Yorkshire held a one-day stoppage Tuesday.

The NASUWT members are protesting management's threat to withdraw teachers from the Teachers Pension Scheme and replace it with an inferior one. Four further strike days are planned.

Management at the GDST Trust's 23 independent schools recently withdrew similar plans after strike action. The NEU, however, accepted the trust's proposal to enrol newly employed staff into its alternative inferior pension scheme.

British Council staff walk out over job cuts

Staff at the UK government's international culture and education body, the British Council, began a two-day stoppage March 17 and held an online rally. They voted by a 73 percent majority for the action. Actions short of a strike will also begin, involving a withdrawal of goodwill.

The Public and Commercial Services (PCS) members oppose plans to cut jobs, restructure the service and outsource some parts of the organisation. The British Council is pushing ahead with plans to make 100 redundancies over the next few months.

PCS pickets were outside British Council offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and Manchester. PCS members abroad took part in the strikes, including in Bogota and Baghdad.

Bakery workers in Nottingham, UK to walk out over pay

Around 170 UK workers employed by Riverside Bakery in Nottingham voted to begin an all-out stoppage on March 30.

The Unite union members were offered a pay rise by the employer predicated on lower premium and overtime rates. This would leave the workers earning just above the minimum wage.

Riverside is part of the Addo Food group, bought by private equity firm PAI Partners in 2020. The bakery makes quiches and savoury flans for supermarket chains including ASDA, Marks and Spencer, Sainsbury's and Tesco.

Dates set for strike by staff at Sheffield college, England over pay

Dates for strikes by staff at the University of Sheffield International College, England, are planned for March 30-April 1, followed by a five-day strike beginning April 4.

The UCU members voted by a 79 percent majority on an 86 percent turnout to strike. The college refused to pay a cost of living rise and improve holiday allowances. Staff prepare international students for courses at Sheffield University, including improving their English, with students paying up to £22,000 a year.

Ancillary workers at Croydon hospital in London vote to walk out over pay

Workers employed by outsourcing company G4S to provide domestic and portering services at Croydon hospital in UK capital voted by a 98 percent majority on a 61 percent turnout to strike.

The GMB members are protesting G4S's refusal to pay to pay the London Living Wage or occupational sick pay.

A protest organised by GMB was held outside the hospital on January 31, against G4S's ending of occupational sick pay for workers testing positive for COVID-19. Without sick pay, workers are forced to come into work with symptoms.

A GMB press release stated, "GMB urges Croydon NHS [National Health Service] to take the contract back in house and place all of the workforce on NHS terms and conditions. Otherwise, we face a strike which could cause the hospital to grind to a halt." It did not give dates for any proposed stoppages.

UK logistics drivers in Burton-on-Trent announce strikes over working conditions

UK HGV drivers employed by DHL Tradetam working on the Molson Coors beer manufacturer contract in Burton-on-Trent announced a series of strikes.

The Unite union members were involved in a three-year dispute over excessive long route journeys. They accuse the company of reneging on an agreement to employ 25 extra drivers to relieve the pressure on existing drivers.

A 72-hour strike is planned to begin April 6, with a further 72-hour

strike beginning April 10. The walkouts will be followed by an overtime ban from April 12 to April 20.

UK pharmacy workers ballot for strike over inadequate pay offer

Around 1,000 workers at UK pharmaceutical company GSK are balloting for industrial action after rejecting pay offers.

The Unite union members rejected a pay increase of 2.75 percent as well as a 4 percent offer with strings attached, a cut in real terms. The ballot closes April 19. GSK makes products such as Sensodyne and Panadol as well as many prescription medications.

College lecturers in northwest England ballot for strike over pay

Around 1,000 lecturers at six colleges across northwest England are balloting for industrial action--Burnley College, Bury College, City of Liverpool College, Hopwood Hall College, Nelson and Colne College and Oldham College.

The UCU members are seeking a minimum of 8.5 percent rise. College lecturers' pay has fallen by around 35 percent since 2009, and the gap between college lecturers' pay and teachers' pay is £9,000 in teachers' favour. The ballot closes on April 11. One of the colleges granted lecturers access to its foodbank scheme, such is the loss of the value of their pay.

Teachers in Northern Ireland to ballot for strike over pay and conditions

Teachers in Northern Ireland are to ballot over pay, working conditions and workloads.

The NASUWT members already overwhelmingly rejected an inadequate two-year pay offer for 2021-22.

Bus workers in Northern Ireland ballot for action over pay

Bus workers including cleaners, drivers and shunters working for Translink in Northern Ireland are balloting for possible strike action.

The GMB and Unite union members rejected a three percent pay offer three times already. The unions submitted a six percent claim. The ballot closes April 1.

UK teachers on Isle of Man ballot over pay and working conditions

UK teachers working on the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea are balloting for possible stoppages.

The NASUWT members are protesting a two percent pay offer backdated to September. According to the NASUWT, the value in real

terms of teachers' pay has fallen by 30 percent since 2010. They are also protesting unsustainable workloads. The ballot closes April 4.

UK civil servants return huge majority in favour of industrial action over pay and pensions

A consultative ballot of civil servant returned an 80 percent majority in favour of industrial action over a 10 percent pay claim.

The PCS union members have seen a real terms loss in pay of around 20 percent over the last 10 years. The turnout for the ballot was 45.2 percent.

PCS General Secretary Mark Serwotka noted, "This is the highest ever yes vote in favour of industrial action in our union's history."

Week of lunchtime protests by college lecturers at Liverpool, UK over dismissed colleague

Last week, college lecturers at the City of Liverpool College (COLC) held lunchtime protests each day at different campuses of the college.

The UCU members were protesting the dismissal of Nina Doran, who had worked for 30 years as a lecturer in the Teacher Education and English at COLC. She was suspended in September and dismissed this month.

Doran was the Liaison Chair for the UCU branch at the college. Her colleagues suspect she was dismissed because of her union activities. In September, COLC was one of 10 colleges involved in strikes over pay and pensions. She is the fourth UCU representative dismissed from the college in the last eight years.

Protest by private hire drivers outside UK parliament

Monday saw a protest outside the UK parliament in London. The drivers working for Uber and Bolt among others were protesting low pay, job insecurity and lack of protection from assaults.

In February last year, Gabriel Bringye was murdered while working as a driver for Bolt.

Airline food delivery workers at Heathrow airport, London vote to accept new pay offer

HGV drivers working for aviation catering firm DO & CO at London's Heathrow airport accepted a new pay offer. According to the Unite union, it represents a 14 percent rise.

The HGV drivers voted to walk out on March 4 and 5, after a 94 percent vote in favour. They are responsible for delivering food mainly to British Airways for pilots and cabin crew. The delivery of food to flight crew is part of their contract, so the stoppage would have led to flight cancellations.

The dispute arose over disparities in pay between DHL and Gate Gourmet drivers, who were transferred to DO & CO under TUPE arrangements in 2020, and existing DO & CO drivers. Under the

agreement the transferred drivers got a six percent rise while the others got 14 percent.

Gatwick, London airport staff win pay rise after consultative vote

Around 500 staff working for DHL to provided ground handling services for Easy Jet airline at London's Gatwick airport won a pay rise. According to a Unite union press release, they were offered a 10 percent rise.

DHL came back with the offer after the workers voted in favour of balloting for strike action in a consultative vote. DHL will also introduce a sick pay scheme. The workers' pay was frozen in 2020 and 2021.

Unite suspends strike by bus drivers in London as employer makes "improved offer"

The Unite union suspended the planned Monday strike of bus drivers working for Arriva South London. They did so after Arriva made an "improved offer" which the drivers are considering. If they turn it down, a planned 48-hour strike for March 28 will go ahead.

The drivers voted by a 95 percent majority to strike after rejecting an initial 1.5 percent pay offer. Drivers at the Brixton, Croydon, Norwood and Thornton Heath garages are considering the new offer. Drivers at the Dartford and Grays depots accepted an improved offer.

GMB union pushes through below-inflation pay deal to end strike of UK refuse workers in Wiltshire

The near two-week stoppage by around 70 UK refuse operatives, loaders and drivers working for Hills Waste Solutions providing refuse collection on behalf of Wiltshire County Council, in England, was ended as workers voted to return to work on March 18.

The GMB pushed through a two percent rise backdated to April 2021 and a five percent rise from April 1, 2022. An existing bonus scheme will be given to a wider layer of workers.

The workers are responsible for bin collection at around a quarter of a million homes in Calne, Salisbury and Trowbridge. They opposed a two percent pay offer. They voted by a 98 percent majority on an 85 percent turnout to walk out.

Protest by NHS staff outside UK parliament

Around 50 NHS staff marched to and protested outside the UK parliament building on Tuesday, after which they marched to Downing Street and handed in a 100,000-strong petition calling for more money for the NHS.

Organised by the GMB union, protestors wore masks bearing the image of UK chancellor, Rishi Sunak.

Middle East

Lebanese electricity production workers continue strikes

On Wednesday, workers at the Lebanese state-owned electricity production company, Electricité du Liban (EDL) announced further walkouts from Thursday until March 29.

They already took strike action this month opposing plans to privatise electricity production and calling for a wage increase. EDL produces 90 percent of the electricity in Lebanon. Stoppages are likely to disrupt electricity supply.

Africa

Clover dairy workers continue nationwide strike in South Africa as unions offer major concessions

The strike by 5,000 dairy workers at Clover Foods in South Africa, now in its seventeenth week, is in danger as the unions move towards a sell-out.

Clover workers are striking against longer hours, poor working conditions, salary cuts, job losses and factory closures. They also demand Clover's nationalisation and for the company to be put under workers' control.

Despite huge concessions by the unions—the Food and Allied Workers' Union is willing to accept five percent in salary cuts for workers, and the General Industrial Workers' Union of South Africa proposes an across-the-board salary freeze—negotiations collapsed. Clover now threatens to take court action to replace the 700 redundant workers it had previously agreed to take back.

The workers are suffering extreme economic hardship as well as violence from company thugs. One was quoted by *iol.co.za* saying, "Clover is now using labour brokers, they have asked the horse and trailer drivers to come back. They have sent their security teams to beat us when we picket. We are still sitting at home with no jobs."

South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners' pay strike could spread to platinum mines

Miners employed at Sibanye-Stillwater gold mines in South Africa are continuing their strike begun March 9 for a R1,000 monthly rise, while the company is offering R700 a month.

While the Solidarity and UASA unions undermined the stoppage by unconditionally accepting the company's offer, the National Union of Miners (NUM) and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) remain out, with AMCU threatening to ask their members at Sibanye-Stillwater's platinum mining operations to strike in support of the gold miners.

The AMCU and the NUM are soon to start pay negotiations across the whole of the Platinum Group Metals sector, which includes Sibanye-Stillwater and two other firms, Impala Platinum and Anglo American Platinum. AMCU say all the platinum companies are hugely profitable.

In 2019, AMCU sold out a five-month stoppage at Sibanye-Stillwater, accepting what it had previously called a "slave labour deal" agreed by both the NUM and Solidarity.

South African e-hailing drivers strike nationwide for increase in fares and lower app commission

E-hailing drivers who work for Uber, Bolt and other driving apps commenced a three-day strike across South Africa March 22. They demand greater regulation of an industry in which app owners take up to 30 percent in commission.

Hundreds of Private Public Transport Association members in Gauteng province handed a memorandum to the Department of Trade and Industry in Pretoria demanding government intervention, and others marched to the provincial government buildings in Johannesburg to petition the Member of the Executive Council for Roads and Transport.

Drivers want an increased base fare of R50 and a drop in commission to 10 percent, saying they cannot afford to live as their net income is reduced by high commissions and rising fuel prices, data costs and car maintenance.

Thousands of South African bus drivers plan Easter strike over pay and conditions

Some 14,000 bus drivers across South Africa plan to strike April 13, as negotiations between unions and the South African Road Passenger Bargaining Council failed to reach agreement.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union and the National Union of Metalworkers South Africa members demand a 10 percent or R10,000 a month increase while employers offered three percent. Drivers also want a compulsory affordable healthcare scheme.

Municipal workers in Pretoria, South Africa in wildcat strike and protest for wage increases

Workers at the City of Tshwane municipality in Pretoria, South Africa staged a wildcat stoppage last week, blocking streets with waste, setting fire to bins, closing depots and causing power outages. The workers are protesting the failure to pay salary increases agreed last year.

The municipality is to dismiss all workers identified as taking part in the unprotected strike, accusing them of intimidating working staff, and said it will take action against any managers who fail to report the striking workers.

The City of Tshwane blames the South African Municipal Workers Union for the strike, but the union denies any involvement.

Nigerian academics begin two-week “warning” strike

Academic technologists in federal universities in Nigeria began a two-week strike on March 21.

The strike stems from the Federal Government's failure to implement an agreement reached in 2009. Almost 98 percent of the National Association of Academic Technologists members voted to strike.

Strike over pay cut shuts down healthcare delivery in Niger State, Nigeria

The strike by state employees in Niger State, Nigeria that started on March 7 is continuing, bringing healthcare delivery to a standstill. Only a skeleton service is provided by managers.

The Nigeria Labour Congress members oppose a cut of 30 percent in the salary paid for February 2022, imposed without prior notification.

Ten arrested over school strike in Uganda

As of March 22, police are holding eight students from Koboko Town College, in Koboko district Uganda and two others after a school strike and damage to school property on March 18. The two others arrested were reported to be local women who helped the students.

Police claimed the local youths arrested were involved in damage to a school following an angry exchange on March 18 between a police officer and a teacher, after which the teacher was suspended from duties.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)