

Mass walkout by tourism workers in Canary Islands over pay; Iran convulsed by ongoing cost-of-living protests; teachers and council workers continue pay strike in Federal Capital territory, Nigeria

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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Tourism workers in the Canary Islands strike and demonstrate for more pay

Over 80,000 hotel, catering and hospitality workers throughout the Canary Islands held a two-day strike April 17 for a cost-of-living pay increase.

The popular holiday destination off the coast of Africa is the most southerly Autonomous Community of Spain.

Up to 10,000 demonstrated in marches through the major tourist areas of Costa Adeje and Playa de Las Américas in Tenerife, distributing leaflets in English to holidaymakers.

The Sindicalistas de Base and COOO union members want a 6 percent wage rise, and threaten further stoppages if the employer body does not move from its 4 percent offer.

Government employees in Finland strike for pay increase

Hundreds of public sector workers in Finland, part of an 80,000 workforce, began a three-day strike Tuesday in support of their pay negotiations.

The striking employees included workers at the Finnish Meteorological Institute, the government's ICT department and officers and administrative staff at several territorial police forces. Further strikes are planned for next month.

The Juko, JHL and Trade Union Pro union members demand a 7.8 percent pay rise over three years. The Office for the Government as Employer, which negotiates pay, has offered only 6.3 percent, blaming the poor condition of the country's finances.

Wealth in Finland is concentrated in the top 10 percent, including seven billionaires who possess over half of the nation's net wealth.

Scottish Water workers strike over pay

More than 1,500 workers employed by state-owned Scottish Water began a 48-hour stoppage at midnight Monday.

Scottish Water is responsible for providing fresh water and disposing of waste water for Scotland's five million population. The Unison, Unite and the GMB union members rejected a pay offer for 2024/25, which they say is only 2.6 percent, but which Scottish Water claims is 3.4 percent. This follows a decade of below-inflation pay offers.

Unison members walked out earlier this month and Unite workers held an overtime and emergency working ban over this dispute.

UK civil servants strike over office closures

Around 1,000 civil servants working for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) walked out on Tuesday. According to its website, the MHCLG's responsibilities range "from fixing the foundations of an affordable home to handing power back to communities and rebuilding local governments."

The Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union members voted by a 70 percent majority to walk out. They are opposing MHCLG plans to close offices, restrict the ability to work from home by requiring a minimum 60 percent office attendance, and the department's recruitment strategy.

PCS members at the Newcastle office, which is under threat of immediate closure, are striking until May 2. Workers at MHCLG offices in Birmingham, Exeter, Sheffield, Truro and Warrington began a four-day walkout Tuesday.

Train drivers at Hull Trains in England strike over dismissal of colleague for raising safety concerns

Train drivers at Hull Trains, which is owned by First Group and runs services on the UK's East Coast main line, are on strike each Friday and Saturday until April 26.

The Aslef union members acted in support of a driver with more than 20 years' experience, who was sacked after raising safety concerns in a meeting. Aslef has 100 percent membership at Hull Trains.

An all-out stoppage, started at the beginning of the month, was suspended by Aslef, who reported Hull Trains was "willing to work toward a resolution." However, talks failed to resolve the issue, and the current two-day stoppage was implemented.

Protests by workers and retirees continue across Iran

Multiple protests on Sunday saw demonstrations by Social Security Organisation retirees in cities across the country, including Ahvaz, Isfahan, Rasht, Shush and Tehran. They were protesting their inadequate pensions, and their chants included, "No handouts, no charity," and "Give us our rights with dignity."

Sunday also saw Tehran Metro workers rally outside municipality offices to protest wage arrears and mismanagement by Metro managers.

Sunday also saw protests by Gachsaran Oil and Gas Company workers demanding the removal of intermediary contractors and that they be directly employed.

For contract workers at the 12th refinery of South Pars in Bushehr, it marked the third day of their stoppage over non-payment of overtime wages. Their strike continued on Monday.

Monday also saw protests by Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI) workers in cities including Bijar, Isfahan, Rasht and Tehran. They accused TCI of corruption and ignoring their pension rights.

The same day saw protests by Social Security retirees in Ahvaz and Shush. Retired steelworkers protested in Isfahan and Kerman, while retired miners protested in Alborz and Sharghi. All were protesting the inadequacy of their pensions.

Living conditions in Iran continue to deteriorate. A newspaper report at the beginning of the year noted that over half the country's population live in poverty, and the riyal dropped by around 30 percent between September 2024 and January 2025. The economic contraction is exacerbated by US sanctions and war threats. US President Trump's regime has put air and naval forces in striking distance of Iran.

Striking Nigerian teachers and council workers hold joint protest

Striking Nigerian primary school teachers and council workers in the Federal Capital Territory held a protest in Abuja on April 23.

The strike by Nigeria Union of Teachers in the Federal Capital Territory and National Union of Local Government Employees members began on March 24 over the non-implementation of the minimum wage of N70,000 and other entitlements. Other state employees in the area are receiving it.

The authorities claim money has been allocated to pay, but no

change has been seen in pay packets.

Nigerian meteorological workers begin indefinite strike, preventing all weather prediction services

Employees at the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) began an indefinite strike on April 23, causing the cessation of all the agency's operations. Some staff slept at their workplace to ensure it did not function.

One of the strikers explained, "The situation is bad for us here in NiMet. In terms of our welfare, the salary package and everything are very low compared to our sister agency."

Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees, Paul Ogochi, condemned the exploitation of staff by some of the domestic airlines: "It's unacceptable. This kind of thing only happens in Nigeria. You can see that unprecedented deaths are occurring in NiMet, as if we are chickens.

"Nearly 70 percent of our staff forecasters have high blood pressure, 90 percent no longer have good vision, because we are constantly working to observe the aerodrome. We have eye defects. It is unbearable. Some of us are taking loans to pay school fees, rent, and even to come to work."

Strike ballot at South Africa's Transnet ports and freight company over pay

Workers at South Africa's state-owned ports and freight rail company, Transnet, are balloting for strike action over pay.

Talks at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration collapsed as the company refused to increase its pay offer. The company offered 6 percent over the next and following year, while the union wants 10 percent.

A stoppage by 20,000 United National Transport Union members would cripple the transport of coal, iron ore and agricultural goods.



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