

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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

Tens of thousands of Spanish doctors continue strikes over changes to pay and conditions

Tens of thousands of doctors and other medical staff across Spain began a five-day strike on Monday, which will continue for one week a month until June. This is the second strike this year to demand separate statutory changes to their pay and terms and conditions of employment. The strikes are also intended to put pressure on regional governments to make changes.

The doctors, under the umbrella of six major medical unions, are organising the strikes for recognition of the unique responsibilities and demands placed upon them as professionals within the state health system. This is in opposition to the framework statute agreed between the Ministry of Health and the main unions, which covers all health workers.

The doctors demand separate statutory recognition of their profession through improved salaries, a 35-hour working week and better pensions and holiday payments. They want consideration of the extra years of training and specialisation not required of other health workers.

Games software designers at Ubisoft in France and Italy strike against layoffs and for better pay and working conditions

Around 1,200 video game programmers at the French games publishing firm Ubisoft in France and in Milan, Italy, held a three-day strike beginning February 10 to protest redundancies and pay and conditions.

Members of the *Solidaires Informatique* digital workers' union demand a 10 percent pay increase and a four-day week. They oppose hundreds of redundancies due to cost-cutting measures and mandatory working in the office five days a week.

Pilots and flight attendants at Lufthansa strike over pensions, pay and conditions

Pilots and cabin crew for the German airline Lufthansa held a 24-hour joint strike on February 12 at airports throughout the country, including the major international hubs of Munich and Frankfurt. An estimated 800 flights were cancelled in the two separate disputes.

About 4,800 members of the VC pilots' union demand that contributions to employee pensions be raised. Members of the UFO union of flight attendants are threatened with 800 redundancies under restructuring plans and want a new agreement on pay and conditions.

Teachers in the Paris region of France walk out over austerity cuts

Teachers in the Île-de-France region went on strike on Tuesday in protest at a budgeted 4,000 job cuts in education nationally.

The coalition of union members then rallied at Sorbonne University in Paris, marched through the city and demonstrated outside the Ministry of National Education.

Tens of billions of euros are being taken from health, education, pensions and local services to finance a rearmament drive and a war policy that is deeply unpopular.

Belgian firefighters hold strike and demonstration in Brussels against cuts

Hundreds of firefighters in Brussels, Belgium, held a protest strike on February 12 against budget cuts causing dangerous working conditions and posing a threat to public safety.

Members of the ACV, ACOD and VSOA unions marched through central Brussels and demonstrated outside regional authority buildings to demand staff increases, more equipment and better training.

They say there is a shortfall of 200 full-time equivalent firefighters, yet the number of callouts is increasing.

Structural steel workers in Bolton, UK, walk out after zero percent pay offer

Around 100 workers employed by Severfield Plc at its Lostock site in Bolton, England, held a 24-hour walkout on Monday. The company manufactures structural steel products, such as those used in the construction of the Shard skyscraper and the new Everton football stadium.

Members of the GMB union, who work as welders, platers and machine operators, voted by a 90 percent majority to strike after being offered a zero percent pay rise.

The company, which has annual revenues of around £0.5 billion, is

refusing a pay rise, citing poor results. The workers imposed an overtime ban, and further stoppages are planned for February 23 and 24.

Further walkout by microbiology staff at UK hospital over pay banding and workloads

UK microbiology staff working at Airedale Hospital in West Yorkshire began a three-day stoppage on Wednesday. They previously walked out from December 18 to 25 and from February 9 to 11.

Members of the Unite union are demanding a higher pay grade commensurate with their skill levels. They are protesting a higher workload after their employer, Integrated Pathology Solutions (IPS), agreed to take on extra work for another hospital trust, meaning an imposed change in out-of-hours rotas while disregarding current workloads.

IPS is a joint venture between Airedale NHS Trust, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust.

Cinema workers in Glasgow, Scotland, resume long-running stoppage over pay and working conditions

Workers employed at the Vue cinema outlet at the St Enoch Centre in Glasgow, Scotland, resumed their strike on Tuesday. They had been on strike since December but suspended their dispute earlier this month for talks with management. The talks failed to produce any resolution.

Members of the Unite union demand the real living wage of £13.45 an hour, union recognition and subsidised transport home after working late shifts.

In a separate dispute, Unite union members employed as hospitality workers at the Village Hotel in Glasgow are continuing their current strike, which began at the end of November. They are also striking for the real living wage for all workers, union recognition and over the company's failure to cover taxi fares home after late or unsociable shifts.

In January, Unite announced it was lodging a legal complaint with the government requesting that the Department for Business and Trade investigate the alleged use of agency staff by the Village Hotel to undermine the strike. It also wrote to the Mint People Agency, a temporary employment agency, raising concerns over the unlawful use of its agency staff in the dispute. The union is investigating allegations of incorrect overtime payments.

Strike by Israeli port workers over fear of job losses following takeover

Around 800 port workers employed by Israeli state-owned international cargo-carrying company ZIM Integrated Shipping Services began an all-out strike on Tuesday. It follows a 48-hour warning strike beginning on Sunday. The workers are employed at the ports of Ashdod and Haifa.

The stoppage is in response to the \$4.4 billion buyout of ZIM by the German-owned Hapag-Lloyd container shipping company. Workers have been told Hapag-Lloyd plans to carve out a new company operating 16 vessels, called New ZIM. However, the new company will only employ

around 120 workers, leaving around 900 to be made redundant.

Transport workers in North West province, South Africa, begin walkout over non-payment of wages

South African transport workers at public utility North West Transport Investment in North West province walked out on February 18 over non-payment of wages.

Members of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union have lost homes and cars after not being paid for 13 months. Two workers died after becoming ill with depression.

Nigerian shopworkers hold protests to demand unpaid salaries

Workers employed by Shoprite held protests in several Nigerian states in the second week of February, demanding payment of months of salary arrears. Many of the protesters have received no salary since December 2025.

They held placards with slogans including "We are starving," "We can't keep quiet anymore," "Pay our salaries and wages," "Pay our 10 months of unpaid pension," "Pay our exit benefits and redundancy," and "Do not transfer us to another employer."

Shoprite's difficulties have been blamed on a challenging economic environment, with foreign exchange volatility, rising inflation and reduced consumer spending. The owners are putting the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the workers and have announced plans for restructuring.

Kenyan aviation workers strike over poor conditions and delayed salaries; union orders return to work

Kenyan aviation workers at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) and Kisumu International Airport held a strike that grounded flights on February 16. They demand an end to poor working conditions, delayed salary payments and ongoing restructuring.

The strike was called off the next day by the Kenya Aviation Workers Union, ending action by air traffic control staff that had disrupted airports and businesses. The union claimed there had been a "breakthrough" in negotiations with Transport Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir, but no details were reported.



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