

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.

Actors and theatre technicians in Greece strike over pay and conditions

Actors and other theatre staff throughout Greece held a 24-hour strike February 20. There was a previous walkout in December 2025.

The Panhellenic Federation of Stage and Audio-Visual Workers members demand a new collective agreement across the theatre industry for increased wages and rehearsal pay, health insurance and better conditions as professional artists.

The strike takes place ahead of protests planned in Greece and among the Greek diaspora to mark the third anniversary of the 2023 Tempi rail crash—a product of austerity and privatisation that claimed the lives of 57 predominantly young people.

In the UK, protests will take place in London, Edinburgh and Manchester on Saturday. Protests will also be held in major cities in Germany, including Berlin, and in Austria, France, Spain, Belgium and other European countries.

Public sector bus drivers in Çanakkale, Turkey strike over unpaid wages and poor working conditions

Bus drivers employed by the Çanakkale municipality in Turkey stopped work Tuesday to protest three months unpaid salaries and long working days without overtime pay.

The Hizmet-?? union members say their buses are unsafe and ill-maintained, and workers are not given life insurance. Facing rising living costs and a significant decline in real wages, many are in debt to banks and cannot provide for their families.

Port workers in Avilés, Spain strike for job security

Stevedores at the port of Avilés, Spain have worked only intermittently each day since February 9 as part of a strike against the liquidation of the port's employment centre, which co-ordinates regular jobs for the dockworkers.

The Stevedores Union members fear the closure of the Port Employment Centre will lead to greater insecurity for port workers. They demand the

integration of temporary workers and the maintenance of employment rights.

Bus workers on Isle of Man walk out over pay and entitlements

Bus workers employed by the Isle of Man government-funded Bus Vannin network began a 10-day stoppage on February 21. Bus Vannin operates the network on behalf of the government Department of Infrastructure (DOI).

The Unite union members are striking over pay, entitlements and conditions. A series of talks initiated by the Manx Industrial Relations Service failed to avert the stoppage. Various offers were rejected, with Unite saying these had included, “reductions in established allowances and alterations to terms that members rely on.”

On Tuesday, with the strike still underway, DOI minister Tom Crookhall said talks between Unite and the government were continuing.

On Wednesday, radio news reported local Unite union leader Debbie Halsall's saying that the latest offer “didn't address core issues about pension and working hours for drivers, and instead involved a one-off payment.”

Teachers' strikes in Kent, England over specialist needs service, and Rochdale, over staff shortages

Teachers working for Kent County Council's Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) in England walked out on Wednesday and held a demonstration outside the County Hall in Maidstone.

The council, run by the far-right Reform UK, brought the STLS service back in-house last September. However, it imposed changes to the service impacting special educational needs (SEND) pupils. The National Education Union members have walked out protesting the imposed changes without consultation, which have changed their role. They say the services offered have been diluted.

In a separate dispute, around 40 teachers at St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic High School in Rochdale, in northwest England began a three-day strike Tuesday. The NASUWT union members accuse school management of failing to provide sufficient staff and resources, leading to some pupils carrying out abusive acts against staff and other pupils.

A NASUWT official Rachel Knight said, “We believe violence, abuse and disruption from pupils has been normalised by school management, with incidents not being dealt with appropriately and a lack of consistent sanctions for pupils.”

Further walkouts are planned for March 3-5 and March 10-12.

Mental health workers in southwest England hold further walkout over pay

Around 100 UK workers employed by mental health charity, Second Step, which operates from bases across Bath, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire began a three-day strike Wednesday. They work as accommodation workers, central staff, recovery specialists and support workers.

This followed stoppages on February 20, 21 and 23, and previous action in January and early February.

The Unison union members are protesting a 2.5 percent pay offer, and are seeking at least 5 percent. They are also seeking union recognition. Some of the workers say that because of low pay they have to rely on food banks to survive.

Infrastructure workers on a London overground rail route strike over pay

Signalling, telecoms and track maintenance workers employed by Cleshar CS Ltd on the London Windrush overground rail route held a 24-hour strike on Thursday.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union members have rejected a 1.5 percent pay offer, well below the current RPI inflation figure. According to the RMT, low pay forces the maintenance workers into working excessive overtime and presents a safety risk through exhaustion.

They are also protesting cuts to overtime rates, sick pay and paternity pay imposed when Cleshar CS took over the maintenance contract. Further 24-hour stoppages are scheduled for March 26 and April 23.

Liberian mine workers' protest over pay and conditions attacked by police

Hundreds of Liberian mine workers employed by ArcelorMittal Liberia held a peaceful protest February 18, which was violently attacked by police. Riot police deployed tear gas and fired warning shots to break up the protest.

The police arrested at least 27 of the miners, who expressed frustration over stagnant wages and inadequate benefits. "We are tired of the attitude of the company," workers said. "They continue to use us day and night, without giving us the benefits or good wages we deserve."

Just over a week earlier, workers of AFCON—an Indian firm contracted by ArcelorMittal Liberia—staged a separate protest, stopping all operations at the mining site in Yekepa. The workers demanded improved wages and better employment benefits, but the Ministry of Labour closed the strike down, declaring it illegal and ordering workers to resume work.

Last year, workers held a week-long protest at the mine, disrupting operations over similar grievances.

Academics and workers strike at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

Academics and workers at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic Owo began an indefinite strike in the middle of February, demanding their wages are brought into line with the new N70,000 national minimum wage. The action brought all activities at the polytechnic to a halt.

The strike was started by Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics members and joined by members of the Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Polytechnics.

The unions had been holding meetings with the Ondo State government at which agreements were reached, but nothing changed. The workers responded by taking to the streets, marching to the polytechnic entrance and blocking it.

Protest in Tembisa township, South Africa against electricity cutoffs

On Sunday night, residents of the Tembisa township protested electricity cutoffs by the City of Ekurhuleni in South Africa. They blocked roads with stones and burning tyres, effectively shutting down the township.

The protests centre on a new billing system and credit control measures introduced by the City. Residents say the new fixed tariffs have led to soaring costs—doubling, in some cases—unrelated to actual usage, and overcharging. Many complain of being left without power or water after disconnections linked to unpaid accounts, including among low-income households actually registered as indigent for subsidies and support. Some wards in Tembisa have up to 40 percent unemployment, meaning many households struggle to pay bills on time.

One resident told press, "We've been overcharged for months, and now we're sitting in the dark while bills keep piling up. How are we supposed to feed our kids or go to work?"

In an attempt to defuse tensions, Ekurhuleni Executive Mayor Nkosindiphile Xhakaza offered temporary suspension of disconnections for indigent households. The state has promised a progressive restoration of power to affected households, especially the indigent ones. Protesters remain sceptical, giving the authorities only a few days to deliver on this.



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