

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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National strike of government officials in the Netherlands over pay freeze

On Tuesday, 2,000 civil servants protested in The Hague, Netherlands. The strike in the capital was part of a 24-hour national strike by 160,000 government officials over pay. Salaries for 2026 are to be frozen with no allowance for inflation, currently at 2.4 percent.

The Federation of Dutch Trade Unions members say they have faced staff shortages and higher workloads for years. A further strike is planned for April 14.

Greek seafarers strike over crews stranded in Gulf war zone

Greek seafarers staged a 24-hour strike Thursday that halted ferry services to protest the danger facing crews stranded in the Persian Gulf amid escalating war in the region.

The walkout was called by the Panhellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO), which demanded the immediate evacuation and repatriation of all seafarers in the Gulf and called for ships to be barred from sailing through the Strait of Hormuz. A number of ships have been damaged as one of the world's most important shipping routes is massively disrupted.

On Tuesday, President Trump announced that the United States Navy would begin escorting commercial tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, a dramatic escalation that would place American warships directly off the coast of Iran as the illegal US-Israeli bombing campaign enters its fourth day.

Greece controls one of the world's largest merchant fleets, with more than 325 Greek-owned or managed ships operating in the wider Gulf region. According to Reuters, negotiations between shipping companies and maritime unions resulted in an agreement allowing seafarers to refuse to sail into the Gulf war zone, with repatriation at the company's expense and compensation equal to two months' basic wages.

Protests were also held in Athens outside the shipowners' association near the port of Piraeus. Reuters reported the comments of Apostolis Kypraios, head of the marine engineers' union PEMEN, who said: "The government and shipowners are responsible for the people trapped in war areas. We demand that they find a solution for our colleagues to return home. Their families are worried."

German public transport workers strike for improved pay and conditions

Thousands of public transport workers on buses, trams and subway trains in towns and cities across Germany began a 48-hour strike February 27, causing widespread disruption.

The Verdi union members demand shorter working hours, increased bonus payments for nights and weekends and higher wages in general.

Airline workers in Italy strike for renewed contracts covering pay, employment rights and working conditions

Hundreds of employees for ITA, the government-owned airline in Italy held a 24-hour strike February 26. Over 55 percent of flights were cancelled from Rome, Naples and Milan airports. Many easyJet pilots and cabin crew also joined the strike, while ground and navigation workers at Vueling and other airlines also held 4-hour stoppages.

The members of six different unions demand renewed employment contracts after the expiry of previous collective bargaining agreements. They say present contracts do not reflect changed working conditions or current inflation.

Health visitors at Welsh health board continue stoppage over pay grading

Around 100 health visitors working for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) University Health Board in Wales are in the second week of a four-week stoppage.

The Unite union members, who are currently paid on band six, argue that their skill levels mean they should be paid at the higher band seven. Unite noted that, “The CTM University Health Board has refused to acknowledge their own job descriptions and pay health visitors accordingly.”

The downgrading leaves the health visitors around £8,000-£9,000 a year worse off. The current action is due to last until March 20.

Academic staff at UK universities strike over pay and job losses

Academic staff at Newcastle’s Northumbria University, England are striking this week.

The University and College Union (UCU) members are opposing plans by the university to move their pension plans from the Teachers’ Pension Scheme to an inferior Universities Superannuation Scheme.

The university is doing this to save around £11 million a year. It has threatened that staff refusing to switch will not be offered a pay rise.

The UCU announced a further 10 days of strikes on March 16-17, 25-27 and April 20-24.

UCU members at Essex University plan to walk out Thursday and Friday this week. This is in opposition to university plans to cut 200 academic and 200 professional staff positions to make £10 million savings. They held seven days of stoppages in February. Further dates of walkouts are planned for March 9-11 and 16-19.

Unison and Unite are to ballot their members at the university over the planned cuts.

Educational Institute of Scotland University Lecturers Association members at Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland took further strike action Monday and Tuesday, and were set to walk out Thursday. They are protesting threatened job cuts including by compulsory redundancy.

Workers strike at University College Hospital in Ibadan, Nigeria

Workers at University College Hospital (UCH) in Ibadan, Nigeria began a five-day “warning” strike on March 2, so the hospital stopped admitting new patients. The strike began in response to a restricted power supply, causing suffering for patients.

Co-chairman of the Council of UCH Union Leaders and UCH Association of Resident Doctors president, Uthman Adedeji said that electricity supplied to service delivery areas and residential

areas was being rationed by management. This was putting patients in danger, exposing staff to hazards and undermining the integrity of the hospital. Surgeries were conducted with headlamps due to power cuts.

“If this continues, the financial survival of UCH is at serious risk,” said Adedeji. He added that there are also severe water shortages caused by the inability to pump water and increased risks of infections being spread.

Workers protest poor conditions at Phebe Hospital, Liberia

Health workers at Phebe Hospital in Liberia commenced a go-slow action in late February, following the breakdown of negotiations on salary disparities and poor conditions. On Tuesday, the Ministry of Information announced a one-month suspension on negotiation with union representatives.

Workers say patients are required to pay a fee before receiving emergency care or oxygen, which causes life-threatening delays. Health Minister Dr Louise Kpoto called a meeting with workers, where she publicly admitted the poor conditions at the hospital, describing the standards of sanitation as “appalling.”

Workers accuse the hospital managers of bad management, creating a hostile environment for the staff. They also point to biased and unfair distribution of benefits to employees, causing the collapse of services that provide critical support, as well as financial mismanagement and lack of transparency.

Unions at University of Cape Town, South Africa accept sellout pay deal and call off strike

Unions representing professional, administrative and support staff at the University of Cape Town, South Africa ended a pay strike begun February 25, after accepting a 3.5 percent pay offer their members had rejected.

The UCT Employees Union, Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union, and National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union members were demanding a 7 percent pay rise.

Two days into the strike, the unions justified the sellout declaring they had won other concessions—unified pay bargaining with academic staff and a one-off bonus. Having warned staff that “no work, no pay” would apply, the university said the two days stoppage would be classed as annual leave, leaving workers out of pocket.



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