

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

30 April 2026

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

Spanish doctors continue monthly week-long national strikes and protests for improvements in salaries and working conditions

On Monday, thousands of doctors across Spain began a third strike, the latest in a series of indefinite intermittent monthly stoppages to demand a separate statutory framework for their pay and terms and conditions of employment. Many hundreds also took part in demonstrations on city streets and outside hospitals.

Over 175,000 doctors, members of six major medical unions, are striking for recognition of the specific responsibilities and demands on them as professionals within the state health system. This is in contrast to the general 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, taking their extra years of training and specialisation into account. They are also calling for to be reflected in improved salaries, a 35-hour working week and better pensions and holiday payments.

Belgian Aldi shop workers in wildcat strike over Sunday working

An estimated 60 of the 440 stores owned by the multinational Aldi supermarket chain in Belgium closed April 24, due to a wildcat strike to protest the management decision to open on Sundays.

The CNE and Setca unions were involved with pay negotiations when the company announced the plans for Sunday opening. Strikes were spontaneously initiated by angry workers after the unions refused to confront management on the issue.

That same day, the federal government announced that all shops in Belgium will soon be able to stay open until 9 p.m. seven days a week.

Strike by hotel workers in Bodrum, Turkey over pay and union rights

373 hotel workers at the luxury Hapimag Sea Garden Resort in Bodrum, Turkey struck April 24 and picketed outside the hotel with placards saying “Five Star Hotel. Zero Star Respect”. They were joined by other workers and local people.

The strike, the first in the history of tourism in Bodrum, began after

management refused to engage in a collective bargaining process via the workers’ union TOLYES’S.

The Hapimag management have tried to persuade workers to resign from the union by offering a 5,000 Turkish lira bonus and a 30.8 percent wage rise—this matches current inflation but is below the 35 percent demanded by the workers.

Guards in French prisons stop work over staff shortages and dangerous overcrowding

On Monday, prison guards in France held a nationwide strike and blockaded many prisons in opposition to stressful and dangerous working conditions due to staff shortages and severe overcrowding.

The UFAP-UNSA union members say the prison system is currently 37.5 percent over capacity and 5,000 more guards are needed. Prisoner support groups complain of inhuman and degrading conditions for inmates at the overcrowded facilities.

Similarly, in Belgium, prison unions have called for a national strike on May 11 over overcrowding, unsafe conditions and increasing workloads.

Staff strike again at London hospital trust over outsourcing and pay

Pathology and clinical engineering staff working for the Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust in London began another five-day stoppage on Monday.

Unite union members working in pathology are protesting the introduction of a new shift system without pay protection. They say the new system will leave them £400 to £1,000 a month worse off. They are also concerned over trust proposals to outsource some pathology services.

Also, the clinical engineers are protesting their recent outsourcing to Siemens Healthineers. The engineers, who are responsible for repairing and maintaining medical equipment, are demanding an independent investigation into Siemens’s failure to properly maintain some equipment. According to Unite, Siemens had to reimburse the trust £1.3 million over its failure to service critical medical equipment over the last 10 years.

Prior to the latest action the workers have held eight strikes days since January over the issues.

Strike by bus engineers in Luton, England over sexual harassment and dismissal of union representative

Bus engineers working for bus company Arriva in Luton, near London began a five-day stoppage Monday.

The Unite union members walked out saying sexual harassment claims by staff against a manager had been dismissed as banter and not taken seriously. The manager has since been sacked but the engineers are demanding the reinstatement of their shop steward.

Arriva claims the shop steward was dismissed for reasons supposedly unrelated to the issue of the manager's sexual harassment. Engineers believe the reason was because the shop steward pursued the harassment claims in the face of management indifference.

Further stoppages are planned for May 11-15 and 25-29.

Academic staff at Southampton Solent University, England set to strike over pension cuts

Academic staff at Southampton Solent University, England were set to walk out Thursday, followed by a four-day stoppage beginning May 5.

The University and College Union (UCU) members are protesting the university's plan to transfer them from their current defined benefits Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS) to an inferior defined contribution one. According to the UCU, the transfer would leave them up to £10,000 a year worse off in retirement. The move by the university is part of its plans to overcome a financial shortfall.

On March 31, around 350 academic staff received an email from the university informing them that from July 1 they would be moved to a subsidiary company, Solent University Services Ltd. As part of that move their pensions would be transferred from the current TPS.

In December last year nearly 300 professional support staff at the university were forcibly moved to an inferior pension scheme with the threat of being sacked if they refused to transfer.

Other universities, including Sheffield Hallam and Chichester, have announced similar plans to create subsidiary companies and move academic staff to worse pension schemes.

Academics have been fighting pension cuts since 2018, including with strikes. These actions are being isolated, following the sellout of national strike action fight linking pension attacks and job cuts.

Nigerian oil and gas workers begin indefinite strike at Seplat Energy

Workers at Seplat Energy, Nigeria's largest independent oil and gas producer, launched an indefinite strike April 3 after negotiations over pay and conditions broke down.

The walkout came as global oil prices rose and the Nigerian state intensifies pressure on companies to boost production, exposing the clash between workers' demands and the profit imperatives driving increased extraction.

Seplat accounts for a significant share of Nigeria's oil output, and has plans to expand production further. A prolonged stoppage risks undermining this.

Union call off strike by teachers in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory

The Nigeria Union of Teachers has suspended a seven-day strike in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) begun by its members April 20, after limited concessions from the authorities. The union ordered a return to work on April 27.

The walkout, which shut down public primary and secondary schools across the territory, was triggered by the non-payment of outstanding entitlements and long-standing grievances over working conditions.

The suspension followed an intervention by FCT Minister Nyesom Wike, who pledged partial payments toward the billions of naira owed and promised to address issues including allowances and promotion procedures. However, only a fraction of the funds has been released, and key demands have been deferred, with union officials warning that the strike could resume if the authorities fail to implement their commitments.

The dispute underscores the deepening crisis in Nigeria's public education system, where chronic underfunding and administrative failures have led to recurring strikes. Teachers face worsening economic pressures and unpaid wages. The government responds with small changes aimed at containing unrest, leaving the underlying causes of the conflict unresolved and pointing to the likelihood of renewed struggles.

Strike by Kenyan health workers suspended at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital

Health workers at the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, Kenya had their planned strike suspended by the unions after last-minute negotiations with management. The unions signed a return-to-work agreement just days before the walkout was due to begin.

The hospital is one of Kenya's largest referral hospitals. Union representatives said the suspension was conditional and that workers will resume their action if their demands are not met.

The dispute centres on long-standing grievances over the non-remittance of more than Sh3 billion in statutory deductions and worsening working conditions, which had already led to a strike notice after repeated negotiations failed to yield any results.

Hospital management pointed to lack of government funding and ongoing financial shortfalls, acknowledging severe staffing shortages as workers leave in search of better conditions. The minor changes touted by the Kenya Union of Clinical Officers and other unions do nothing to resolve their members' grievances, with workers continuing to face mounting economic pressures and a collapsing health system.

Strike continues at National Arts Council of South Africa over owed pay and conditions

A strike at the National Arts Council of South Africa (NAC) has entered its third month with no resolution in sight.

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) members demand R1 million in long-overdue performance bonuses, among a raft of deeper grievances. Workers point to years of unpaid compensation, entrenched mismanagement and a lack of transparency that have left staff economically squeezed.

Negotiations have reached a stalemate, with the dispute being raised in Parliament. The NAC is threatening legal action, labelling the strike unprotected. Workers insist their strike is a last-resort defence against persistent neglect and broken promises.

The fallout is being felt across South Africa, with grant disbursements delayed, cultural projects stalled, and communities denied vital support. The strike reflects the decay of the public sector, where mismanagement and austerity imperatives undermine both workers' livelihoods and the cultural infrastructure.

At stake is not just the livelihoods of NAC staff, but that of artists and communities reliant on a functioning public arts institution.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact