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.

Regional transport workers in the Netherlands strike against changes to working conditions

Regional transport workers across the Netherlands staged a two-day strike Monday disrupting bus, tram and regional train services after negotiations with the employers' organisation broke down over a new collective bargaining agreement. The dispute affects around 13,000 workers employed by operators including Arriva, Transdev, EBS, Qbuzz and Keolis.

The FNV and CNV union members oppose proposed changes to their conditions, including longer working hours, an increase in unpaid breaks and reduced advance notice of work schedules, from eight days to four.

The workers also insist on the withdrawal of changes to allowances for irregular working hours and arrangements that protect older workers from late shifts and excessive workloads. They say further strike days will take place on December 3, 4, 14-15 and 18 unless their demands are met.

Train drivers in Portugal strike for better pay and working conditions

Portuguese train drivers at state-owned rail operator CP began a five-day strike Monday, causing widespread disruption to local, regional and long-distance services across the country.

The National Union of Portuguese Railway Drivers members demand the restoration of lost purchasing power, improved wages, greater professional recognition and better conditions, including improvements to working schedules, rest periods and railway safety.

The strike highlights the growing discontent among railway workers over wages, deteriorating working conditions and safety.

Teachers in Madrid, Spain continue strike for increased pay and improved conditions

Teachers in public schools across Madrid, Spain entered the seventh week of an indefinite strike Monday. They demonstrated outside the regional education department, handing over a petition containing 27,786 signatures of support collected by families.

The teachers demand higher salaries, smaller class sizes, more support staff and counsellors, reduced teaching hours and increased funding for public education.

The dispute, begun October 14, intensified following regional government instructions requiring teachers to maintain political "neutrality" in schools, prohibiting displays of strike-related posters and discussion of the walkout with pupils. The teachers denounce these measures as censorship and an attack on freedom of expression, academic freedom and the right to strike.

Teaching staff at four Catholic schools in northwest England strike over academisation plans

Teaching staff at Corpus Christi Catholic High, Our Lady's Catholic High, and English Martyrs Catholic Primary schools in Preston along with those at the Cardinal Allen Catholic High in Fleetwood walked out Tuesday. It was the first of a planned six days of stoppages over the next two weeks.

The members of the National Education Union, NASUWT union and the National Association of Head Teachers oppose plans to move the schools from local authority control to become part of a Catholic-Church-run multi-academy trust (MAT).

They say the move would mean a loss of autonomy and finance. The Catholic Bishop of Lancaster is pushing for the remaining 27 (of 80) Catholic schools within the Lancaster diocese to become part of a church-run mega-MAT.

Strike by senior doctors in Northern Ireland over pay

Consultants and specialist doctors working for the National Health Service (NHS) in Northern Ireland began a 24-hour stoppage on Monday.

The British Medical Association (BMA) members voted by over 90 percent to reject a 3.5 percent pay offer. They are calling for pay levels to be restored in value to their purchasing power in 2008. The senior doctors provided so-called "Christmas Day" cover for emergency and urgent care. Strikers and their supporters held a rally outside Ulster Hospital.

On November 20, resident doctors (formerly known as junior doctors) in Northern Ireland, who are BMA members held a 24-hour stoppage, also over pay.

UK hospital theatre assistants in Leeds in ongoing strike lobby NHS

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trust board meeting

UK hospital theatre assistants working at Leeds General Infirmary, St James's Hospital, Chapel Allerton Hospital and Wharfedale Hospital in Otley have been on indefinite strike since October 7. The hospitals are part of the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. The workers plan to lobby a meeting of the trust board at St James's hospital 9am on Thursday.

The Unison union members demand to be graded on Pay Band 3 rather than their current lower Pay Band 2 of less than £13 an hour. They also demand back pay for higher-level responsibilities, arguing that regular tasks they already perform, such as handling samples and supporting surgical teams, qualify for the higher band. Theatre assistants at other trusts have won regrading after taking or threatening action, in some cases with several years' back pay—five at Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation trusts.

Prior to the current continuous action, they held 40 days of intermittent stoppages.

Bus drivers in York, England to walk out over pay

Around 200 bus drivers working for First Bus in the city of York, England are set to walk out Saturday and Sunday.

The Unite union members, currently paid £15.58 an hour, are seeking pay parity with Yorkshire Coastliner bus drivers. Yorkshire Coastliner, which runs services through the city, pays its drivers £16.90 an hour.

First Bus reported this week a 7 percent increase in its profits to £110 million for the six months to September. Announcing the stoppage, Unite said it would "escalate severely" over the Christmas holiday season if no resolution was found.

UK nuclear weapons base workers strike over pay

Around 70 nuclear weapons technicians employed by the ABL Alliance at the Royal Naval Armaments Depot (RNAD) Coulport in Scotland were on strike Monday through Wednesday. ABL, a joint venture company comprising AWE plc, Lockheed Martin and Babcock Marine, is under contract to the UK Ministry of Defence to service and maintain the UK fleet of nuclear weapon submarines. AWE plc workers were on strike Monday, Lockheed Martin workers Tuesday, and Babcock Marine workers Wednesday.

The Unite union members are seeking an improved pay offer. Strikes scheduled for November 16, 17 and 19 were postponed for workers to vote on an improved offer, which was rejected.

A ban on overtime has been in place since November 9. Further stoppages are planned for November 30, December 1 and 3.

Strike of truck drivers in Iran protesting soaring costs

On Saturday, the Union of Truck Drivers and Trucking Associations Across Iran issued a strike call for truck drivers to take place Sunday.

The call was answered by truck drivers in around 10 Iranian cities, including Chabahar and Dezful. By Tuesday, the strike had entered its third day and spread to around 15 cities including Ahvaz, Bam, Isfahan and Tehran.

The drivers were protesting the increasing costs of maintaining their vehicles. One driver explained the cost of 40 litres of engine oil and five filters is now the equivalent of $230, while the minimum monthly wage is $62. Despite the sharp rise in maintenance costs, the rates paid for freight charges remained the same.

Other sections of workers also took action. Tuesday saw protests by workers at the Traves transport machinery company in the city of Karaj, protesting the dismissal of work colleagues and continuing layoffs. Also in Karaj, paramedics protested in front of the Governor's office over wage arrears and conditions. Pensioners in Kermanshah province rallied outside the Department of Labour, protesting their inadequate pensions and rising medical costs that are making some treatments unaffordable.

Iran's economic crisis continues, with reports of further power outages and long queues at petrol stations in several cities.

The US naval blockade following decades of sanctions has wrecked the Iranian economy. Iran is under continuous threat of further military attacks by US imperialism.

Protests in Syrian town over power outages

On November 19, residents protested in the Syrian town of Ali al Ghanem, near the city of Raqqa. They blocked roads using burning tyres, protesting frequent power outages and poor basic services. Later they moved towards the town's municipality building, where they were confronted by Internal Security Forces.

University lecturers in Zamfara State, Nigeria, begin indefinite strike over pay

Lecturers at Zamfara State University, Nigeria, began an indefinite strike on November 17 over the state government's failure to implement agreed salary increases and pay outstanding entitlements.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) members demand implementation of the December 2025 federal government-ASUU salary agreement, payment of promotion arrears and settlement of other outstanding financial obligations. The walkout followed a two-week ultimatum and a one-week warning strike from November 11.

Acting ASUU branch chairman Anas Abubakar Dogo said negotiations with university management, the governing council and other stakeholders ended without resolution.

The Zamfara State government responded by establishing a committee to review salary structures, unpaid allowances and promotion benefits across state-owned tertiary institutions. Secretary to the State Government Abubakar Nakwada appealed to workers to suspend industrial action and allow negotiations to proceed, citing the state's financial constraints.

Nigerian polytechnic lecturers strike across four southwestern states over unpaid allowances

Lecturers at Nigerian state-owned polytechnics, colleges of technology

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and monotechnics in Ogun, Oyo, Osun and Ekiti states began strike action November 16 over unpaid allowances.

The Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP), Zone C, members demand implementation of the Consolidated Academic Tools Allowance and Earned Academic Allowance, together with accumulated arrears dating back to January 1, 2026.

The allowances form part of an agreement between ASUP and the federal government, concluded in April 2026. While lecturers in federal institutions have begun receiving the payments, their counterparts in state-owned institutions have been excluded, despite performing comparable duties and facing the same rising cost of living. Ondo is the only state in the southwestern zone to have implemented the agreement, leaving lecturers in the four affected states without payments for more than 10 months.

ASUP zonal coordinator Adekunle Masopa said the union wrote to state governors on August 10 and again on September 21, demanding implementation of the agreement, but received no satisfactory response. The union's National Executive Council subsequently issued a 15-day ultimatum, which expired on November 10.

Health workers' union in Oyo State, Nigeria, suspends strike for two weeks

Allied health professionals in Oyo State, Nigeria returned to work after their union agreed to suspend their indefinite strike for two weeks following negotiations with the state government.

The Nigerian Union of Allied Health Professionals (NUAHP) members, employed under the Oyo State Hospital Management Board, walked out on October 28 over unpaid allowances, stalled promotions and discriminatory employment conditions. Workers resumed duties on November 23, after nearly four weeks of industrial action.

Their demands include payment of teaching allowances, restoration of call-duty allowances for dental therapists and implementation of salary-grade progression under the Consolidated Health Salary Structure (CONHESS). Medical laboratory scientists and radiographers demand promotions previously denied them, while other workers are seeking payment of ward-coat and laboratory-coat allowances. Other demands include changes to hospital management guidelines to ensure allied health professionals are represented on management and other important committees.

The union agreed to suspend the strike following a November 19 meeting at which government representatives appealed for workers to return, promising concrete action on their grievances. Union officials said the two-week suspension would allow the government to demonstrate its commitment through tangible measures.

Liberian university lecturers threatened with dismissal after four months on strike against pay erosion and worsening conditions

Lecturers and staff at the University of Liberia have been on strike for four months against pay erosion, pensions and worsening conditions. They are now threatened with being sacked if they do not return to work by December 1.

The University of Liberia Faculty and Staff Association members began industrial action in July, demanding a 40 percent salary increase, payment of outstanding benefits and improvements to university facilities. The prolonged dispute has disrupted teaching and examinations.

University president Layli Maparyan announced on November 23 that the Board of Trustees had instructed employees to resume duties, warning that those refusing would be replaced with new hires. The administration claims to have allocated US$6.35 million towards renovations and secured commitments to address unpaid pension contributions. The 40 percent pay demand remains unresolved, however, while proposed salary adjustments for lower-paid staff are dependent on approval of the university's 2027 budget.

The university administration has scheduled classes to resume on January 4, 2027. Reports suggest President Joseph Boakai supports the threatened dismissals, although no formal presidential directive has been given.

Strike called at Kenyatta National Hospital in Kenya over delayed salaries and unpaid deductions

Nurses and other healthcare workers at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya walked out November 24 over delayed salaries, partial wage payments and outstanding statutory deductions. Kenya National Union of Nurses and Midwives members demonstrated outside the hospital, accusing management of deducting money from their wages for pensions, insurance premiums and loan repayments without forwarding the payments as promised.

The workers say management's failure to remit deductions has left them struggling to meet financial commitments. The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU) reported that doctors' salaries have been withheld and statutory contributions gone unpaid for five to six months.

KMPDU issued a 72-hour ultimatum demanding hospital management resolve the grievances. Nairobi branch secretary Maureen Wanjiru warned that doctors at the hospital would join the strike from December 1 unless their demands were met. The Kenyatta National Hospital is one of Kenya's largest public healthcare facilities.

Low pay, long hours and job insecurity behind strike at TFG distribution centres in South Africa

Hundreds of logistics and warehouse workers at The Foschini Group's distribution centres in Midrand and Kempton Park, Gauteng, South Africa began a protected strike on Monday. They are fighting poverty-level wages, six-day work weeks and the company's use of labour brokers to keep a section of the workforce in permanent insecurity.

Representatives said 296 workers in Kempton Park backed the action, with around 100 striking in Midrand. TFG, owner of 39 retail brands including Foschini, Jet, @home, Markham and Sportscene, is preparing contingency measures to protect sales during the festive trading period. Workers picketed outside the Riverfields facility in Kempton Park and the Lords View facility in Midrand.

Esther Mwasi, who began in 2019 as a labour-broker contract worker and was made permanent only six years later, works from 7.30am to 4pm, Monday to Saturday, getting just four full days of rest a month. Her take-home pay is R6,200 a month, which does not cover rent, groceries and crèche fees for her three children as prices keep rising. Albert Ramalepe, who has worked for three years through Adcorp's labour broker BLU, said broker workers see their weekly earnings swing between R500 and

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R1,400 and drop to nothing during “lay-offs” that can last more than three weeks. Workers receive no overtime pay for weekend shifts.

The workers, advised by the Simunye Workers Forum, are demanding a Monday-to-Friday 45-hour week, with mandatory overtime pay for weekend work, and grading by job, with pay of between R12,000 for general crew and R17,500 for clerks.

The dispute has dragged on for a year, with TFG disputing the timeline and saying wage talks began only in February 2026. After talks deadlocked and the dispute was referred to the CCMA, the body issued a certificate of unresolved dispute, clearing the way for a legal strike, with notice served on 20 November.



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