
Collective Bargaining News: 1st Quarter 2017

Wage Negotiations

- **Germany:** IG Metall has negotiated a new agreement for 75,000 steel workers in the North-West. Wages increase by 2.3% from 1 April 2017 and by additionally 1.7% from 1 May 2018. An agreement on partial retirement was prolonged. So was an agreement on subcontracting. Two weeks of warning strikes were necessary. [Read more](#)
- **Denmark:** CO-industri has negotiated a collective agreement valid for more than 230,000 blue and white collar workers. The agreement, which contains a wide range of improvements, follows up the first and second common demands. [Read more](#)
- **Sweden:** IF Metall, together with sister unions within industry, has signed new agreements valid for three years. The agreements have a total value of 6.5% and favour low-wage earners. [Read more](#)
- **The Netherlands:** On 8 March 2017, FNV and CNV Vakmensen started the negotiations on the new, collective agreement for the metalworking and engineering industry. Their members had chosen the following priorities: Decent work, pay, employability and a Generation Pact. [Read more](#)
- **Austria:** In the autumn of 2016, PRO-GE concluded collective agreements with six employers' associations in the metal industry applicable to 180,000 workers. Wages increase by 1.5%-2.0%. Additional improvements were achieved regarding job quality. [Read more](#)

European Policies

- **The ETUC** campaign “Europe needs a pay rise” has been launched. Luc Triangle underlined that addressing the wage gap and especially the need for upward wage

convergence between eastern and western Europe was a matter of priority for industriAll Europe. [Read more](#)

- **The EESC (opinion on the Social Pillar):** Europe must be able to adapt itself to changing realities to maximise opportunities for all. This is our alternative to protectionism, nationalism and populism. [Read more](#)

National Policies

- **France:** CFDT-FGMM has initiated a working time survey. The backdrop is the massive introduction of digital tools that influence work organisation. The outcomes of the survey will be published in June 2017. [Read more](#)

Articles

- **Thorsten Schulten (Hans Böckler Foundation):** The European Union should actively promote administrative extension in order to strengthen collective bargaining all over Europe. [Read more](#)
- **Martin Myant (ETUI):** There are huge wage disparities across the EU. The level in Romania in 2015 was about half that of the Czech Republic, which was in turn less than one third the German level. Wage gaps remain enormous even where work tasks are very similar. [Read more](#)
- **Karel Fric (Eurofound):** Minimum wages have increased over the last years, but most of the new Member States have considerably lower rates than the old EU-15. [Read more](#)
- **Andrew Tanabe (Bertelsmann Foundation):** Dual labour markets carry obvious economic and social risks. They create wage gaps, reduce productivity while leading to higher employment volatility. Moreover, disheartened workers are finding a voice in political populism. [Read more](#)

Economic and Social Data

- **Eurostat:** Only 35% of all managers in the EU are women. Their salaries are on average 23% lower than those of male managers. [Read more](#)

Study Reports

- **European Commission/ILO:** Countries with coordinated bargaining have prevented growth of inequalities on the labour market, while the erosion of collective bargaining in other countries has led to an increase in low-paid jobs. [Read more](#)
- **Eurofound/ILO:** The organisation of working time is changing and working time regulations need to reflect this reality. It is particularly important to address unpaid overtime, and to ensure that minimum rest periods are respected. [Read more](#)
- **Eurofound:** The social partners have little influence in the Economic Semester. Trade unions are particularly critical to interference in collective bargaining. [Read more](#)
- **ETUI:** Europe is experiencing social divergences and needs policies that can generate higher living standards based on fair integration and upwards convergence. 21 million are unemployed and many of the newly created jobs are poorly paid. [Read more](#)

Legal cases¹

- **EU Court:** An internal rule of an undertaking which prohibits the visible wearing of any political or religious sign does not constitute direct discrimination. A Belgian employee had been dismissed after having insisted on wearing an Islamic headscarf at work. [Read more](#)

¹ Decisions taken by the CJEU can be downloaded in full text in all official languages from the [Curia](#) website. The number of the case above is C-157/15