
Collective Bargaining News: 4th Quarter 2015

Wage negotiations

- **Germany:** IG Metall has successfully negotiated a new agreement covering 75 000 workers in the north-western steel industry. Wages increase by 2.3% (14 months). In addition come one-off payments to workers of 200 euros and apprentices of 80 euros. Agreements on partial retirement, secure employment and subcontractors were prolonged. [Read more](#)
- **Austria:** After three bargaining rounds PRO-GE and GPA-djp reached agreements with employers' associations in three subsectors of the metalworking industries. [Read more](#)
- **The Netherlands:** After 12 weeks of negotiations, demonstrations and strikes the employers in metal & technology finally met the demands for a good and modern collective agreement valid for 26 months. A pay rise plus numerous qualitative improvements were achieved. [Read more](#)

European policies

- **The ETUC and the European Trade Union Federations** have conducted a joint European research to assess the reality of arduous occupations. They demand explicit recognition of arduous work. [Read more](#)
- **EU:** The Commission has sent a first stage consultation document to the European social partners on work-life balance. The document has a strong focus on gender issues but still a rather limited approach. [Read more](#)
- **EU:** The Commission has made a recommendation to the Council on the setting up of National Competitiveness Boards, to be mandatory in the euro area. Unions do not see the need for these boards and fear that they will mainly focus on wages and infringe the autonomy of the social partners. [Read more](#) [Position of industriAll Europe](#).
- **EU:** Three million migrants entering the EU by 2017 are development likely to have a marginal positive impact on the economy, according to the European Commission. [Read more](#)

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- **European Social Partners:** IndustriAll Europe and the European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG) have signed a ground-breaking roadmap for the period 2015-2020. The Roadmap sets five joint priorities for the five years to come. [Read more](#)
 - **EU:** The Commission claims that it is proposing a very ambitious approach to workers' rights and sustainable development in the EU-US trade talks (TTIP). [Read more](#)
 - **ETUC** has issued a highly critical position paper on the Annual Growth Survey for 2016. [Read more](#). The EU has later submitted its [package of proposals](#).

National policies

- **Finland:** The Government has once again changed course with its confusing proposals for new labour market legislation. It has asked the social partners to negotiate alternative solutions to its own proposed austerity measures. [Read more](#)

Articles

- **Squeezing wages** across a large part of the euro area is dangerous and deflationary. Moreover, it will not improve anyone's relative competitive position while undercutting domestic demand everywhere. Ronald Janssen comments on IMF discussion note. [Read more](#)
- **The Eurozone needs fixing.** But first there is a need for agreement on what has gone wrong according to Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). [Read more](#)
- **German wage moderation** has contributed to imbalances and the crisis in the Eurozone according to Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). [Read more](#)
- **Wage growth** would be the quickest way to increase consumer demand. National minimum wages or 'living wages' could in addition arrest increases in income inequality asserts Maarten van Klaveren . [Read more](#)

Economic and social data

- **EU:** The Commission's autumn forecast shows that the European economy will enter its fourth year of economic recovery in 2016. However, new challenges appear, such as the slowdown in emerging markets, increasing geopolitical tensions and the fear of a more

disruptive adjustment in China or of another bubble in the financial markets. [Read more](#), see also [full document](#).

- **Eurostat:** Euro area annual inflation was 0.2% in 2015 according to a flash estimate. Food prices went up by 1.2% whereas energy prices fell by 5.9%. [Read more](#)

Study reports

- **ETUI** has produced an overview of country specific recommendations (CSR) to the EU Member States in the field of employment and social policies. [Read more](#)
- **ILO** has published an overview of developments in bargaining coverage rates, bargaining levels and trade union densities at the global level since the onset of the economic crisis in 2008. [Read more](#)
- **Eurofound:** Collective bargaining has come under pressure in most European countries. Trade union densities do not increase anywhere. The average coverage of collective agreements in the EU stood at 61% in 2012, 7 percentage points lower than in 1998. [Read more](#)
- **Social Inclusion Monitor Europe (SIM):** There is a growing social divide among the EU Member States. In general the social situation has been deteriorating since 2009. [Read more](#)

Legal issues¹

- **CJEU:** Public entities may exclude from tenders companies which do not undertake to pay predetermined minimum wages to their staff. [Read more](#)
- **CJEU:** When determining if there is a collective redundancy under the EU Directive of 1998, workers on fixed-term contracts should be included in the head-count. Otherwise, the effectiveness of the Directive would be undermined. [Read more](#)

¹ Judgements passed by the CJEU can be downloaded in full text in all official EU languages from the [Curia](#) website. The numbers of cases above are C-422/14 and C-115/14 respectively.