Strikes in Europe (version 3 - July 2016)

Kurt Vandaele
interactive map on strikes in Europe
version July 2016
Days not worked due to industrial action in Europe, 2000-2015


Data source: ETUI, own calculation.
Average days not worked due to industrial action in Europe

2000-2009
weighted average 53 days not worked per 1,000 employees

Data source: ETUI, own calculation.
Average days not worked due to industrial action in Europe

2010-2015
weighted average 38 days not worked per 1,000 employees

Data source: ETUI, own calculation.
Days not worked due to industrial action, comparing 1990s with 2000s


wa: weighted average, sa: simple average.

Data source: ETUI, own calculation.
Days not worked due to industrial action, 2009-2015


wa: weighted average, sa: simple average

Data source: ETUI, own calculation.
General strikes (including threats) in western Europe, 2000-2014


Note: Including general strike threats (2009: Finland; 2001: Luxembourg)
Austria

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Not codified in the Constitution or in national legislation. No Supreme Court case law exists on the topic. Since 1870 collective action has been tolerated.

peak 2003: Union mobilisation against state pension reform and exceptional railway strike against its restructuring.

peak 2011: 2-days warning strikes in the metal sector.

source: Statistik Arbeiterkammer, Sozialstatistik, Streikstatistik; ÖGB Streikstatistik

data coverage: Only strikes. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Belgium
multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Recognised as an individual right and developed through case law.

peak 2005:  Union mobilisation against early-retirement scheme reform.
peak 2011:  Public sector strike against pension reforms.
peak 2012:  General strike against unemployment scheme reforms, pension reforms and austerity measures.
peak 2014:  Country strikes and general strike against austerity measures.

source:  Rijksdienst voor Sociale Zekerheid/Office nationale de sécurité sociale

data coverage:  Strikes and lockout. Strikes in the public sector are excluded until 2002. Since 2003 strikes in the public sector are included except for strikes in the local and county administration.
Cyprus
mixed bargaining system

Guaranteed by the Constitution.

peak 2006: Sectoral one-day strike in construction industry over a renewal of the industry-wide collective agreement.
peak 2011: Public servants’ strike against a two-year pay-freeze and austerity measures.
peak 2012: 24-hour strike in construction industry but also strikes in other industries, mostly in protest to honour pay rises and cost-of-living increases.
peak 2013: Open-ended strike in the construction industry over the renewal of the industry-wide collective agreement; it was the longest strike in Cyprus' history since 1948.

source: Department of Labour Relations, Labour Disputes Statistics; ILOSTAT.
data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Excluding strikes that last less than 2 hours. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
**Denmark**

multi-employer bargaining system

Guaranteed by the Constitution and developed through case-law and, most importantly, regulated by collective agreements between the social partners.

**right to strike**

- **private sector**
- **public sector**

_peak 2008:_ Large strike in the healthcare and social work sector for a wage increase at time of the renewal of collective agreements.

_peak 2013:_ Lockout by the municipalities association in the education sector.

**source:** [Danmarks Statistik. Arbejdssstandsninger](https://www.statistikbanken.dk/)

**data coverage:** Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Estonia

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2003: One-day strike in education and culture workers for pay increase.
peak 2012: Teachers’ strike and strike in health care sector both over pay increase.

Finland

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Private sector
Public sector

Implicitly guaranteed by the Constitution and explicitly by law.

peak 2005: Four-day strike and numerous other strikes in the paper-industry over a renewal of the collective agreement.
peak 2010: Large two-week strike of stevedores about severance pay and outsourcing besides several other strikes in manufacturing and in wholesale and retail trade.

source: Statistics Finland, Labour Market, Statistics on labour disputes.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
France

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector public sector

Recognised as an individual right and guaranteed by the Constitution; regulated by law in the public sector and mainly developed through case law in the private sector.

peak 2003 and 2010: Union mobilisation against pension reforms.

source: 2000-2004 (volume): ILOSTAT
Since 2005 (volume): ETUI estimate based on combining DARES data and data from the Direction générale de l’administration et de la fonction publique. The DARES covers industrial action in the private sector including some semi-public enterprises. The data from the Direction générale de l’administration covers the public sector and overlaps with the DARES data in case of some semi-public enterprises. Relying only on the DARES data clearly underestimates the volume.


data coverage: Strikes
Germany
multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Implicitly guaranteed by the Constitution and developed through case-law.

peak 2006: Strikes in the public sector, particularly health care, besides short warning strikes in metal industry.
peak 2015: Warning strikes in metal and electrical industry; strikes in the social and education sector.

Hungary

single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and by law.


data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. 2012: Only strikes. Excluding strikes that last less than 100 days. Workers involved includes workers directly and indirectly involved.
Ireland

**single-employer bargaining system**

**right to strike**

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Guaranteed by law and developed through case-law.

**peak 2009:** 24-hour national public service strike against government’s pay cuts.


**data coverage:** Only strikes. Disputes are included if they involve a stoppage of work lasting for at least one day and the total time lost is 10 or more person-days. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Italy
multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike
private sector  public sector

Recognised as an individual right and guaranteed by the Constitution and developed through case-law.

peak 2002: General strike against labour market reforms.

source: Istituto Nazionale di Statistica; ILOSTAT. Official strike data is no longer collected since 2009. The reports of the Guarantee Commission provides data on called strikes in the so-called ‘essential public services’.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Latvia

single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2008: Not attributable to a single large strike.

source: ILOSTAT.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Lithuania
single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2008: Various teacher’s strike over a pay increase and other demands and other strikes in the public sector.


data coverage: Only strikes. Workers involved includes workers directly and indirectly involved.
Luxembourg
mixed bargaining system

right to strike

Developed through case law.

peak 2007: One-day general strike in public sector and a two-day railway strike over civil service and state employee pensions.

Malta
single-employer bargaining system

right to strike
private sector public sector

Indirectly recognised by law.

peak 2009: Not attributable to a specific large strike.

source: Industrial and Employment Relations, Publications and Archives, Archives, Annual Reports; ILOSTAT.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
**Netherlands**

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

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Developed through case law.

**peak 2002:** Strike action in construction industry.

**peak 2012:** 15 weeks strike in cleaning sector over renewal of collective agreement besides strike action in the education sector against austerity measures.

**source:** Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Cijfers, Statline databank, Thema, Arbeidsmarkt, Vakbeweging en stakingen, Historie Werkstakingen

**data coverage:** Only strikes. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Norway

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Mainly regulated by collective agreements between the social partners.

nearly two yearly peaks: Negotiations about renewal of collective agreements in the economic sectors.


data coverage: Strikes and lockout; excluding strikes that last less than 1 day. Workers involved includes workers directly and indirectly involved.
Poland

single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2008: Various teachers’ strikes over a pay increase and other demands and other strikes in the public sector.

source: ILOSTAT, Yearbook of Labour Statistics.

data coverage: Only strikes; excluding strikes that last less than 1 day; workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved
Portugal
multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike
private sector public sector

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2002: Several strike actions, particularly in the public sector, against changes in the Labour Code.
peak 2012: major strikes and two general strikes against austerity measures.

source: PORDATA. No data for 2008 and 2009

data coverage: Only strikes; excluding public administration; workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved. The participation in industrial action and the days not worked due to industrial action are underestimated as the public administration is not included.
Romania

single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peaks 2000 and 2007: Several strike actions in particularly the manufacturing industry.

source: ILOSTAT. Official data is very partial in 2009 and not available after 2010.

data coverage: Only strikes. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Slovakia
mixed bargaining system

right to strike
private sector public sector

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2003: Limited number of strike actions in railways and the public sector.


data coverage: Only strikes; workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Slovenia

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2005: Union mobilisation against labour market reforms.

source: Carley (2004), Carley (2008) and Carley (2010); Trade union data (ZSSS). Official data is not available.
Spain

multi-employer bargaining system

geright to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law.

peak 2004: Strike action in shipyards over renewal of collective agreements and against relocation decisions in mainly the manufacturing industry.

days not worked and workers involved are notably underestimated in 2010 and 2012 and 2013:

general strikes in 2010 and 2012 are excluded as well as various strikes in the public sector in those years and in 2013.

source: ILOSTAT; Ministry of Employment and Social Security, Statistics, Condiciones de trabajo y relaciones laborales, Huelgas y Cierres Patronales.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts; excluding strikes that last less than 1 hour; workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Sweden

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law and in the 1938 collective agreement between the social partners.

peak 2003: Large strike of blue-collar workers in the municipal and city council sector over a new pay agreement.


data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Workers involved excludes workers indirectly involved.
Switzerland

multi-employer bargaining system

right to strike

Guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law and in the 1938 collective agreement between the social partners.

peak 2004: Difficult to attribute to a specific large strike.

source: Office fédéral de la statistique, Thèmes, Organisation du marché du travail, conventions collectives de travail, Données détaillées, Grèves et lock-out.

data coverage: Strikes and lockouts. Excluding strikes that last less than 1 day. Workers involved includes workers directly and indirectly involved.
United Kingdom

single-employer bargaining system

right to strike

private sector  public sector

Regulated by law.

peak 2004: One-day strike by civil servants to protest against governments plans to cut a large number of civil service posts.

peak 2007: One-day strike by postal workers in protest over pay and modernisation plans and one-day strike by prison officers against the government’s decision to introduce a pay award in stages.

peak 2011: Union mobilisation against public service pension reforms in June and November.


Since 2009: Strikes and lockouts. Excluding strikes that last less than 1 day. Workers involved includes workers directly and indirectly involved.
### Right to strike, legend

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<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, with minor restrictions</td>
<td>Yes, with minor restrictions (e.g. recognized union, balloting, proportionality, respect of peace obligation, only military, judiciary or police excluded – as per ILO convention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, with major restrictions</td>
<td>Yes, with major restrictions (e.g. monopoly union, compulsory arbitration or conciliation, restrictions on issues or content, major groups excluded)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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**Source:** J. Visser, Database on Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts (ICTWSS), database, version 5, November 2015. The indicators reflect the situation in 2014.
Prevalent bargaining regime, legend

Single-employer bargaining system: *the establishment or company level is predominant*

Multi-employer bargaining system: *sector and/or the cross-sector level is predominant:*

Mixed bargaining system: *an intermediate situation where sector and company negotiations each, respectively, account for at least one-third of those covered by collective wage-setting arrangements.*

**source:** P. Marginson and C. Welz (2014), Changes to wage-setting mechanisms in the context of the crisis and the EU’s new economic governance regime. Dublin, Eurofound.