

# *German Public Workers Go on Strike Over Wages*

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Berlin, March 14 (RHC)-- Public service workers in Germany have staged a fresh strike to ramp up pressure on the government ahead of a new round of wage talks between state officials and trade unions. The industrial action, which was called by the Verdi trade union, followed a day-long work stoppage in six German states, which saw some 56,000 participants.

The union said hospital workers, teachers and other public sector employees in four other German states joined the walkout. The union is demanding a minimum 5.5-percent pay rise for civil servants, struggling against a plan to cut pension benefits in Europe's biggest economy by 20 percent.

The German government, which is set to hold negotiations with trade unions next week, has so far made no counter-offer. It is not the first time that Germany has been hit with strikes in recent months. Last year, pilots at Germany's main airline, Lufthansa, staged a series of industrial actions in a dispute with the German flag carrier's management over retirement arrangements.

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