

Tens of thousands striking airport security staff ground flights across Germany



Long queues on the day of the security inspectors' strike at Frankfurt Airport (Photo by Lando

Berlin, February 1 (RHC)-- Tens of thousands of passengers have been grounded as airport security personnel throughout Germany, including the international hub Frankfurt, have walked off the job to demand better wages.

At least 1,100 flights were cancelled across 11 airports throughout the country Thursday after a 24-hour walk-out was called by the labor union Verdi which affected more than 200,000 passengers, marking an industrial action which adds to the ongoing challenges faced by Europe's largest economy.

So far, in Frankfurt, Germany's largest airport, 310 out of around 1,120 scheduled flights have been canceled, and have advised passengers to not come to the airport as the security checkpoints were closed.

The other affected airports by the walkout called by the union included Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Hanover, Cologne, Duesseldorf, Leipzig, Dresden, Erfurt and Stuttgart.

Verdi stated that it aims to reimburse its members for the decline in purchasing power caused by the significant inflation.

The labor union has demanded a pay increase of 2.80 euros (\$3.04) per hour along with improved compensation for overtime throughout 12 months, representing the interests of 25,000 employees in the industry.

The strike warning was declared by Verdi earlier this week following the unsuccessful outcome of the third round of collective bargaining negotiations with the Federal Association of Aviation Security Companies (BDLS).

According to Frank Haindl, the lead negotiator for the employers association BDLS, the demands put forth by Verdi would result in an additional expenditure of approximately 250 million euros for the companies involved, solely in the year 2024.

Germany, the fourth largest economy in the world after the United States, China and Japan and the largest economy in Europe, has been hit by a wave of strikes in recent weeks. The association of German airport operators ADV also flagged the strikes' detrimental effect on the economy.

The detrimental impact of the strikes on the economy was also highlighted by the Association of German Airport Operators, ADV. "In Germany, we see strike announcements almost daily to the detriment of mobility and the economy. This must be stopped," ADV general manager, Ralph Beisel said.

Last week, German train drivers staged a five-day strike following a week-long nationwide protest by German farmers who had blocked the country's roads.

The upcoming industrial action on Friday is expected to bring public transport to a standstill throughout the country.



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