

German industry workers begin strike after pay rise talks fail

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Employees of Extrusions GmbH stand in front of the company gate during a warning strike organised by IG Metall, in Monheim, Germany, Oct. 30, 2022. (Photo by AP)

Berlin, October 31 (RHC)-- Workers in Germany's metal and electronics industry have started a strike after pay talks stalled amid high inflation. The first "warning strikes" in the metal and electrical industry, numbering some 3.8 million employees, started Saturday night after six weeks of unsuccessful talks and irreconcilable differences.

Several thousand employees took part in the walkouts from across Germany such as North Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and

Hamburg. For several weeks, representatives of employers have been negotiating on wages, but they have not reached a conclusion before the end of an obligatory negotiation period.

Germany's IG Metall union is demanding eight percent more wages in the current round of collective bargaining, which includes around 26,000 businesses in the auto, electronics and manufacturing industries. In regional negotiations on Thursday and Friday, the employers had offered one-time tax-free payments of 3,000 euros and also an unspecified increase in the wage tables for a period of 30 months.

Further warning strikes are planned for the next week. The labor leader indicated that only shorter warning strikes of a few hours are planned until the fourth round of negotiations, which begins on November 8 in the southern states of Bavaria and Baden-Wurttemberg. After that, IG Metal will decide how to proceed.

Germany is coping with an inflation rate of 11.6% as a result of a drop in energy imports from Russia in the aftermath of the Ukraine war which has led to surging energy prices, pushing inflation to its highest rate in more than 25 years.

Germany is not the only country in Europe that is facing protest as European countries are facing ever-increasing strikes and protests due to high energy prices and the mounting cost of living. Germany is Europe's economic powerhouse and Berlin's faltering economic performance will affect the whole continent.

The UK economy shrank by 0.3% in August, it experienced a 10.2% inflation rate in September, which was the highest in 40 years, and with the resignation of the prime minister, Liz Truss, the economic outlook for Britain is set to get worse.

French protesters and strikers are demanding higher wages from the profits of energy companies amid high oil and gas prices. Protesters say they need a substantial pay rise to cope with the soaring cost of living. France is currently experiencing inflation at 6.2%; the highest rate in decades.

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