

Nationwide Strike in France

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The strike of French energy workers that began on September 27th grew into a nationwide strike on October 18th. The interprofessional strike was organized by the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), FO, FSU, Solidaires, and a number of youth organizations. The strikers' main demands are the indexation of wages in line with inflation and the freezing of energy prices.

One of the industries affected the most by the strike was the transport sector. In addition to fuel shortages at 30% of the country's gas stations, the joining of the railroad and bus drivers in the general strike has made travel in French cities much more difficult. Almost half of the trains in the Paris area were suspended due to the strike. Bus service was disrupted in every region of France.

In addition to the transport sector, education workers have joined the strike. According to the Ministry of Education, about 6% of teachers across the country did not go to work on October 18th. Also, 10% of secondary and 23% of vocational school teachers went on strike.

Employees of the supermarket chain Monoprix, car companies Renault and Stellantis, the pharmaceutical company Sanofi, and other commercial organizations went on strike.

The nationwide strike was accompanied by mass demonstrations and processions in many major cities. A total of 107,000 demonstrators took to the streets on October 18th, according to the French Ministry of the Interior, and 300,000, according to the CGT trade union. More than 70,000 people gathered in Paris alone.

Despite the high level of mobilization of the French workers' movement, there is no revolutionary party capable of directing the growing discontent of the working class into the mainstream of the struggle against capitalism. The most prominent political force at the strike action in Paris is Jean-Luc Mélenchon's social-democratic party Unbowed France, which calls on workers to fight for their rights within the existing capitalist system. However, freedom and justice for the working class cannot be achieved under capitalism, but only through the establishment of socialism.