**Portugal: Latest working life developments - Q2 2016**

***Abstract***

*The most significant developments in this quarter were: four holidays were reintroducedand the 35 hours week was re-established in the public service. Job precariousness and unemployment remain matters of concern affecting particularly young people and those with higher education levels. Data about income evolution in Portugal reveals that over the past 20 years the income of young people diverged from the national average, increasing 65% between 1989 and 2009, 15 percentage points below the average.*

**Re-introduction of four national holidays and the 35 hours week in the public sector**

During this quarter two important laws were adopted. [Law no.8/2016](https://dre.pt/application/file/74018009) replaced four holidays removed in 2013 (26 May, 5 October, 1 November, 1 December) and [Law no.18/2016](http://www.cite.gov.pt/asstscite/downloads/legislacao/Lei_18_2016_2a_alt.pdf), re-established the 35 hours week as normal working hours in the public service. This measure was a demand of all the Portuguese trade unions, however the employer confederations are against it, arguing that this measure represents added costs.

**Slight recovery in collective bargaining in the private sector**

In the first semester 2016 the number of collective agreements increased by 17.7% and the number of workers covered increased by 21.3% compared with the same period in 2015. Nevertheless the number of workers covered is still very distant from what was common until 2011.

**More than 300 collective agreements in local administration came into force**

In the first four months of 2016 322 collective agreements were concluded in the public sector. This extremely high number of agreements had already been signed since 2014 - mostly between unions and local administration - but have been blocked by the center right government. Following a decision of the Constitutional Court (TC) this blockade was considered unconstutional and came into force. Most of the provisions regard the return to 35 hours week in local administration.

**Portuguese dock workers union (SETC) reach deal with port operators after long strike**

For the last three years a long strike took place between the Portuguese dock workers union ([SETC](http://www.stec.pt/)) and the port operators (stoppage of overtime work and refusal to handle cargo if movement of that cargo was undertaken by non-port workers or road hauliers). On 26 May 2016 the union suspended the strike after agreeing to a new collective agreement providing limitation of temporary agency work and integration of temporary agency workers in regular contracts; recognition of skills and career development and redefinition of wage scales, as key elements.

**Job precariousness and unemployment remain a matter of concern**

Following a slight decrease in unemployment rate, this peaked again in the [first quarter of 2016](http://www.gep.msess.gov.pt/estatistica/be/2016/bejun2016.pdf).Unemployment affects particularly the young people and those with higher education: between the first quarter of 2015 and the first quarter of 2016 there were more 4,4 thousand unemployed people with higher education, representing an increase of 3.7%. The unemployment of people holding other educational levels - basic and secondary levels – decreased 16% and 7%, respectively.

Data from the INE about [income evolution in Portugal in the last 20 years](http://expresso.sapo.pt/sociedade/2016-04-09-A-geracao-atraicoada) reveals that over the past 20 years, the income of young people diverged from the national average. Between 1989 and 2009, income of the youngest increase 65%, 15 percentage points below the average.

Additionally, between 2009 and 2013 the average monthly earnings of young employees decreased: those aged 25-29 lost 6% of their average monthly earnings and those aged 30-34 lost 9%.

**Time use by men and women in Portugal**

Paid work and unpaid care work was a relevant issue during this quarter. According to the preliminary results of the “National Survey on Time use by men and women” promoted by Centre for Studies for Social Intervention- [CESIS](http://www.cesis.org/pt) with the collaboration of (Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment - [CITE](http://www.cite.gov.pt/)), men spend on average per week, in their professional activity, two hours more than women (42 hours and 55 minutes against to In 40 hours and 47 minutes). Furthermore, fixed schedule is the predominant form of organization of working time for men (68.2%) and especially for women (74.1%), following shift work (13.5% of women and 16.1% of men).

The results of ad-hoc module [“Work organisation and working time arrangements”](https://www.ine.pt/ngt_server/attachfileu.jsp?look_parentBoui=263344442&att_display=n&att_download=y) show that as large proportion of the employed population needs to change the working times occasionally (less than every month) due to work demands. Women are the ones that less frequently have to change their working times (72.6% against 65.0% of men).