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Dear Member,

NEW ZEALAND LABOUR NEWS

Women Lead at PSA

The **Public Service Association** (PSA), New Zealand's largest union, announced Kerry Davies will co-lead the 77,000-member strong organisation as one of two union National Secretaries. The confirmation means that, for the first time, the PSA's top leadership will all be women.

Davies, who is succeeding retiring incumbent National Secretary Glenn Barclay, has been acting National Secretary since late 2018 while Erin Polaczuk was on maternity leave.

Davies, who will now lead PSA with Polaczuk, said, "I'm honoured to be confirmed as National Secretary of our union. PSA members are campaigning hard to end the ethnic and gender pay gaps, and ensure no decision is made without the workers' voice being heard."

"I look forward to continuing the progress our union has made and taking on new challenges. PSA members are deeply committed to the work they do, and through our collective efforts we will make New Zealand a fairer and better place to live."



*National Secretary Kerry
Davies (PSA)*

The New Zealand Government has already hit its 2021 target of having 50 per cent female representation on state sector boards and, by the end of the year, is expected to have closed any gender pay gaps within the same roles in all government agencies.

The Public Service Association (PSA) is spearheading another equality campaign, the **Aotearoa Wellbeing Commitment**, dedicated to ensuring all key public services are universally delivered, so everyone gets the chance to do well socially, mentally, and physically.

These include healthcare, education, housing, income support, public transport and internet - which form Kiwis' essential social infrastructure... "services that we shouldn't have to pay for but are invested in by governments to provide a wellbeing foundation for all New Zealanders."

[Learn more](#) and make your voice heard!



NZCTU Election Report Card: The Results Are In!

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) has released its Election Report Card, rating the five political parties in Parliament on six issues of importance to working families.

At the end of July, NZCTU sent each of the political a survey about working people's rights - and whether they will stand up to support: Safer Sick Leave, Four Weeks Redundancy, Fair Pay Agreements, Health and Safety, Stronger Public Services and a Living Wage.

[Click for RESULTS](#)

Four of the parties - Greens, National, New Zealand First and Labour - completed the survey (ACT sent links to their policy documents).

Now you can find out which politicians care about your issues and how they were graded. When you vote this election - *vote for parties who will put working people's rights first.*

Find out [how they ranked!](#)

Pak 'n Save Workers Strike for A Living Wage

After five years of "fruitless" pay negotiations, Richmond Pak 'n Save workers plan to go on strike.

Pak 'n Save stores are individually owned as franchises under the Foodstuffs co-operative, which controls an estimated 53 per cent of New Zealand's grocery market.

While many North Island stores have negotiated collective agreements for workers, the South Island stores, which include New World, Raeward Fresh and Four Square, have been unable to broker an agreement with the South Island operation -- which reported a revenue of more than \$3 billion this year.

FIRST Union retail organiser Ross Lampert said, "At a time when supermarkets are making huge profits, it's really shameful that the Richmond Pak 'n Save owners are continuing to fight against progress and trying to stall and delay bargaining at their employees' expense."



(Braden Fastier/Stuff)

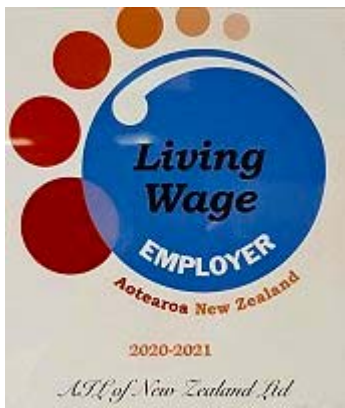
"These are essential workers who will no doubt be called on again if the country returns to lockdown, and they deserve a real agreement that will protect them and ensure that they're paid fairly when New Zealand needs them more than ever."

Pak 'n Save Richmond owner Andrew Howard said, "We are engaged in good faith bargaining with First Union and have met with them with the goal to conclude a collective agreement."

Lampert, however, said "the company's most recent offer manages to come in below many workers' current pay rates, most of which are already below a living wage."

On September 1st, the mandated new **Living Wage** rate of \$22.10 for accredited Living Wage Employers came into effect, but since it is voluntary for employers, not all workers in Aotearoa will benefit.

The Living Wage concept is very simple, but powerful. It is the hourly wage a



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Employers. [CLICK](#) for the
list!

worker needs to pay for the necessities of life and participate as an active citizen in the community. It reflects the basic expenses of workers and their families such as food, transportation, housing and childcare, and is calculated independently each year by the New Zealand Family Centre Social Policy Unit.

AIL of New Zealand Ltd is proud to be an accredited Living Wage Employer.

Learn more about the [Living Wage Campaign](#)

E tu Welcomes 'Just Transition' for Tiwai workers

On 28 September, the Labour Party announced its commitment to keeping the Tiwai Point smelter open for an additional three to five years, rather than see it close in August of 2021 as proposed by Rio Tinto.

E tu says Labour's just transition approach will give workers and communities in Southland confidence time to develop a transitional plan for a future with good jobs to replace those at the Southland smelter.

Tiwai delegate Owen Evans says, "To get the three to five-year extension is better for the majority. It means that a lot of young ones with big mortgages don't have to quit straight away, and they can upskill while they're still working."

The transition would also allow for possible recovery of the aluminum market post-COVID-19, said Evans.

E tu Negotiation Specialist Joe Gallagher said the premise of a Just Transition is simple - it means the costs of the big structural change, such as a shift to low-carbon economy, must be spread evenly and not fall heavily and disproportionately on workers. Just Transition is a trade union concept developed and used in many countries, including most recently in New Zealand in Taranaki.



Tiwai Point Smelter (E tu)

"E tu has been active in driving Taranaki's transition and any just transition process needs to have active involvement from workers and their unions." said Gallagher.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR NEWS

GLOBAL: COVID-19 Wipes Out an Estimated 500 Million Jobs Worldwide

Bloomberg: The damage to labor markets from the coronavirus is proving worse than anticipated, according to the International Labour Organisation, which also sees a much slower recovery at the end of this year.

The ILO said that global working hour losses so far this year have been "considerably larger" than previously estimated. In the second quarter, working hours were 17 per cent lower compared with the end of 2019, equivalent to almost 500 million jobs. That's up from 400 million projected in June.

Global working-hour losses are expected to amount to 8.6 per cent in the fourth quarter, equivalent to 245 million full-time jobs. While the situation will improve in the second half, the outlook has also worsened considerably since June. The (ILO) also said there's been greater damage to jobs in developing economies, where there (is) less opportunity for home working, and on informal work.

Worryingly for the long term, the ILO said the decline in employment has led to an increase in inactivity.

That could leave many people cut off from the labor market, slow the job recovery and increase inequality.

US: America's Unions Stand Proudly with TPS Workers

AFL-CIO: In response to the decision of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to allow the termination of temporary protected status (TPS) for four countries, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issued the following statement:

"As a result of this ruling, hundreds of thousands of working men and women, many of whom are on the front lines fighting the virus, find their lives and livelihoods at unacceptable risk. Our entire workforce has benefited from TPS, and we will all be harmed if these vital workers are needlessly stripped of their status.

President Trump's decision to end TPS was cruel and wrong, and its harmful impact will be even greater amid this pandemic. We are disappointed that the court allowed the termination of protections that have helped to raise wages, support a stable workforce and reduce exploitation in our country.

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens everyone in our country and reveals just how interconnected we really are. Today's court ruling further destabilizes our workforce and worsens already dangerous gaps in coverage for immigrant workers in our nation's COVID response. Congress must take immediate steps to protect TPS holders and their families. We call with renewed urgency on officials at all levels of government to ensure that all workers, regardless of immigration status, have access to medical testing and treatment; meaningful safety supports when we are reporting to work; and income replacement, cash payments and other vital benefits when our livelihoods are disrupted. We are all in this together, and none of us will be safe until all of us are safe.

Dismantling TPS is a direct attack on union members and union values that only strengthens our resolve to overcome racial divisions and demand changes to a system rigged to benefit the wealthiest and corporations."

Canada: Air Canada Flight Attendant Union says Rapid Testing Needed to Save Airline Jobs, industry

Canadian Union of Public Employees: The union representing flight attendants at Air Canada and Air Canada Rouge is calling on the federal government to administer rapid testing at airports, to make flying safer and to save jobs in the airline industry.



(CUPE)

The Air Canada Component of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), which represents 10,000 flight attendants, says COVID-19 has decimated the industry and without federal action, thousands of jobs will permanently disappear. The union says a bailout alone won't help the industry since it won't make flying safer. However, the union is suggesting that if passengers were tested prior to boarding from out-of-country destinations, this would ensure a safer flying environment for the public and airline workers alike.

"The Canadian economy relies on a strong airline industry, and it's key to keeping communities and families connected," said Wesley Lesosky, President of the Air Canada Component of CUPE. "People need to travel for work and families want to reunite, but they also want to know it's safe to fly. Approving rapid 15-minute tests at the airport will help address both these problems and stimulate travel."

Some airlines have taken advantage of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and EI Top-Up to help keep their furloughed and active employees on full payroll during the pandemic but others, like Air Canada and Air Canada Rouge, have not. Lesosky says tens of thousands of jobs are at stake, and will disappear without government action, but reiterated that the government has options to support workers

and their families even if it is reluctant to offer direct support to the industry.

"We don't know how long we'll be living with the coronavirus," said Lesosky. "But what we do know is that without rapid testing, it's possible our industry and many others won't ever recover."

Since the outset of the pandemic, CUPE has maintained that any government support to the airline industry should have significant carve-outs and guarantees for supporting workers, rather than protecting only corporate bottom lines. CUPE also maintains that any government assistance should come with a stake in the companies.

CUPE represents 15,000 flight attendants nationwide at nine different airlines.

Switzerland: Protect Wages, Not Borders

IndustriALL Global Union: Unions hit a double target and win in Geneva and Switzerland... A union campaign encouraged the 500,000 population of the Geneva area to vote against growing poverty in one of the world's most expensive cities by introducing a minimum living wage of CHF 23 (US \$25) per hour.

At national level, Swiss unions and their political allies convinced voters to resist right wing attempts to divide workers over borders.

In a vote on 27 September, over 58 per cent of Geneva voters said 'YES' to the initiative "23 frs, c'est un minimum" (23 francs is a minimum). At the same time, 69 per cent at national level said 'NO' to the right-wing initiative to limit the entry of workers from European Union member states, an attempt to blame foreign workforce for worsening conditions.

Through the system of direct democracy, the Swiss population can call for a referendum to change or introduce a law. Swiss unions and left-wing parties used this mechanism to launch an initiative on the minimum living wage in the canton of Geneva.

The association of Geneva unions, Communauté genevoise d'action syndicale, which includes IndustriALL affiliates UNIA and SYNA, says in their statement that with their vote "Geneva has just given a very clear signal to employers and to all those who try to pit workers against each other: against precarity and abuse by employers, it is wages that must be protected and not borders."

According to Travailler en Suisse, which provides statistics on working conditions in Switzerland, the Swiss monthly gross salary across all sectors in 2016 was on average CHF 6,502 (US \$7,083). In the most qualified positions, the average gross monthly salary varied from CHF 4,825 (US \$5,256) in catering, to CHF 12,302 (US \$13,400) in the banking and finance sector.

Most workers already received at least CHF 4,313 (US \$4,698) per month, often through existing union collective agreements. However, in the absence of union agreements the lowest paid 10 per cent of employees fell through the cracks and were not paid this minimum for a full working day.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed their precarious situation. The Swiss population, accustomed to decent living standards, was shocked at the poverty of the working poor who queued for food in specially organized food distribution centres while COVID-19 restrictions were in place.

The campaign launched by the unions and their progressive allies helped to further raise public awareness and, unlike in 2011 and 2014, finally win the campaign for the living minimum wage. Unlike in other countries, where the minimum wage is often not enough to live on, the Geneva minimum wage is a living wage, and the highest in the world.

The initiative establishing a legal minimum wage in Geneva is a historic victory, from which 30,000 employees will benefit directly, two thirds of them women. Geneva is the third canton in Switzerland to

introduce a minimum wage after Neuchâtel and Jura. Ticino will follow soon.

Ukraine: Miners' Protest Goes Underground

Solidarity. Hundreds of mine workers have spent weeks underground attempting to win concessions from their employers.

Twenty-nine miners at the Oktyabrskaya Mine began the protest in early September. With no response from management, the strike began to spread.

By mid-September, nearly 400 workers at four mines belonging to the Kryvyi Rih Iron Ore Plant were participating in the protests.

Above ground, the miners are being supported as hundreds of local miners and members of their communities held daily demonstrations.

The miners' demands include a wage increase, improved working conditions, better pensions and enforcement of health and safety regulations. They are also demanding that the mines' management, which is widely seen as corrupt, is dismissed.



(Twitter/Eric Lee)

Unlike most workplace occupations, an underground protest comes with serious risks to the health and safety of the workers involved. The protesting miners have been exposed to harsh conditions, with high levels of humidity and spreading fungus. They have reported negative effects on their lungs and skin.

At the start, the general director of the company spoke to the protesters in the streets and even descended into the Oktyabrskaya mine to talk to the underground protesters for ninety minutes. But there has been no dialogue since then.

The chairman of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine (NPGU), Mykhailo Volynets, is calling on management to engage in social dialogue as soon as possible, but so far with little effect.

Volynets reported that management has increased the pressure on the miners, including attempts of some members of parliament to encourage the workers to change the leadership of their trade unions. "It seems that they want to take control of trade union organizations," he said. This would be "in violation of international labour standards and national laws."

There has been some progress. There are rumours that some of the mine managers, those accused of corruption, have been dismissed.

The mine workers are keen to get international support. Some of them recorded an appeal to members of the European Parliament asking for help to protect their rights, and to protect protesters' families from persecution.

The global union federation representing mine workers, IndustriALL, is giving the union its full support.

Kemal Özkan, IndustriALL's assistant general secretary, supported the miners' demands. "We call on state authorities to pay all wage arrears to coal miners," he said, "and the Kryvyi Rih Iron Ore Plant management to engage in a social dialogue with unions to resolve the critical situation as soon as possible and avoid the dangerous underground protests in the future."

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