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Annual Industrial Action Report 2022

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Contributors:
Labour Market Information and Statistics Directorate
Author: Ms Millicent Semono
Editor: Mr Abrahams Mutedi

Editing, layout and design, photography and distribution
Media Production Unit
Chief Directorate of Communication
Department of Employment and Labour

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMCU	Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union
AFADWU	Agricultural Food and Allied Democratic Workers Union
APSA	Academic & Professional Staff Association
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CEPPWAWU	Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union
Covid-19	Coronavirus
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DEMAWUSA	Democratic Municipal and Allied Workers Union of South Africa
CWU	Communication Workers Union
DENOSA	Democratic Nursing Organization of South Africa
DETAWU	Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers' Union
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
ECCAWUSA	Entertainment, Catering, Commercial and Allied Workers Union of South Africa
FAWU	Food and Allied Workers Union
FOSAWU	Future of South African Workers Union
GIWUSA	General Industries Workers Union of South Africa
HOSPERSA	Health and Other Services Personnel Trade Union of South Africa
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMATU	Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union
LMIS	Labour Market Information and Statistics
NWU	NASA Workers Union
LRA	Labour Relations Act
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NEHAWU	National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union
NTM	National Transport Movement
NULAW	National Union of Leather and Allied Workers
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NAPSAW	National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers
SACTWU	South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union
PAWUSA	Public and Allied Workers Union of South Africa
PSA	Public Servants Association
PSCBC	Public Service Co-Ordinating Bargaining Council
PTWU	Professional Transport Workers' Union
SACTWU	South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union
SACU	South African Communication Union
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers' Union
SANC	South African Nursing Council
SATAWU	South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union
SEIFSA	Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa
SOCRAWU	Security Officers Civil Rights and Allied Workers Union
TASWU	Transport and Services Workers Union
TAWUSA	Transport and Allied Workers Union of South Africa
UASA	United Association of South Africa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Labour Market Information and Statistics directorate acknowledges and thank the senior management in the Department, in particular the Acting Deputy Director General of the Labour Policy and Industrial Relations (LP&IR) Branch for their contributions towards the completion of this annual labour dispute report. The LMIS officials have been comprehensive to ensure that strike data collected and analyzed is accurate and relevant to all stakeholders. In this context, the LMIS team efforts are acknowledged and appreciated. Similarly, it is of importance to acknowledge the Chief Directorate of Communications within the department for their immense work done in designing the layout of the report in the best way it meets our users' expectations.

Furthermore, the LMIS directorate is very grateful for the working relationship with the employers and employer's associations in the country who made efforts to voluntarily submit the LRA 9.2 forms after end of strikes in their workplaces. The information that you provided to the Department through your cooperation and support has been useful in developing the 2022 Annual Industrial Action report. We further encourage employers and employer's organizations to continuously report strikes information in order to expand on the coverage to meaningfully measure the level of industrial disputes in the country as mandated by the Labour Relations Act of 1995 (LRA). This will also enable us to provide valuable inputs necessary for addressing the labour market related challenges and initiate road maps for achieving targets and indicators envisioned in the National Development Plan (NDP).

Last but not least, a big thank you goes to the users, the researchers and decision makers who when we publish the report, they always recognize our product and use it for further research evidence-based policy decision.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the South African labour market is still struggling to return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic of economic recovery challenges, growth over the next few years will remain a challenge putting pressure on business and labour to realize full recovery. Like their global counterparts, South African companies and workers are still grappling with a worsening economic outlook as we experienced into 2022. South Africa's unemployment rate has risen to record high (widespread retrenchments) associated with low labour absorption and high inflation rate while real wages have remained almost unchanged.

During salary and incentive negotiation seasons, all parties had to tackle the question of what constitutes fair compensation in light of the prevailing high cost of living. As much as employers would want to keep pace with inflation, the pressure becomes high and varied whiles margins remain compressed. Companies would likely want to play it safe and hold back on substantial increases and bonuses to keep the balance sheet stable during these uncertain times.

In an attempt to monitor the impact of labour disputes in the South African labour market, data collected from the employers using the LRA 9.2 form reflects that the South Africa's labour market unrests were pushing above higher levels as the lockdown measures were fully lifted and industries were fully back to operation in 2022. While it is not unusual for the initial demand from unions to be high, economists have also warned that South African labour market was likely to see increased strike actions with much of the pressure expected to come from the public sector wage negotiations.

Overall, the community industry was again mostly affected by the strikes and lockouts in 2022 with reasons due to wages and other compensation benefits. Workers and the unions went on strikes after they have rejected the wage offers indicating that they were not in-line with inflation since Interest rates have been rising globally because of record-breaking inflation, This meant changes to the way workers spend and save money.

Key highlights of the Industrial Action Report in 2022:

- As at 31 December 2022, record levels of work stoppages in the South African labour market had risen to 87 strikes incidents compared to 66 strikes in 2021. This represents almost 32% strike increase between 2021 and 2022. The increase was mainly noticeable in the mining, trade, utility and transport industries. The increase in labour disputes in the country signals that workers are still not able to meet their basic needs, as most of them are cash-strapped.

- From quarter one of 2019 to quarter four of 2022, the patterns in the number of strikes recorded in the South African labour market and the number of employees involved remain positively correlated. This could suggest that strike emerges as a strong mechanism to force companies to match soaring price inflation over time.

- Of the strike recorded in 2022, most industrial actions were dominant at company only (60%) followed by stay-away (19.5%) and strike lockouts (16%) by employers. Companies with more than 1 000 employees lost more days of production in 2022 compared to companies with less than 1 000 employees.

- More than half (51%) of un-procedural strikes were reported in 2022 as compared to 61% in 2021. The decline in the number of unprotected strikes is embraced but it remains a concern since it could be associated with violence. Higher levels of un-procedural strike activities were reported from the community sector's local authorities, health and social services and the security services.

- In December 2022, approximately 3 334 637 working days were lost due to labour disputes in South

Africa, far above during the COVID-19-pandemic in 2020 with an average of 783 945 working days lost and 1 158 945 working days lost in the country in 2018. In this case, the time loss ratio was at 228 days per 1 000 employees in South Africa in December 2022. It was almost five times higher than in 2021 and relatively two times higher than in 2018.

- Overall, there were 153 527 workers involved in labour disputes from 1 883 041 workforce reported in 2022 as compared to 90 299 workers involved in labour disputes from 216 598 workforce reported in 2021. This represents almost 8% of worker's participation in labour disputes in 2022 compared to 42% of workers that went out to challenge their employers demanding higher wages and better working conditions in 2021. Furthermore, the production growth from the mining (96.2%), agriculture (95.8%) and trade industries (73.6%) were mostly interrupted with employee participation in work stoppages in 2022.
- The demand for wage, bonus and other compensation benefits was the main reason to participate in work stoppages, as reported by workers over the last five years (2018-2022).
- In terms of wages lost, more than R1.2 billion wages lost were reported by employers in 2022. However, strike data reflected close to R218 million wages lost in 2021. In 2022, higher wages lost represents an increase of 7.6% between the two years emanating from the mining, manufacturing and transport industries that were hit hard with production loss due to work stoppages. Largely, more wages lost in the private sector was also associated with the strike duration that workers stay away from performing companies' activities.
- Between the sectors, private sector accounted for 88% working days lost above the public sector's working days' loss of 12% in 2022. These trends were similarly observed in 2021. Most working days lost from the private sector emanated from the mining industry (63.4% days lost) with 96.2% of the workforce who participated in strikes demanding higher wages. Similar to 2021, more strikes in 2022 came from the community (51%) followed by strikes in the manufacturing (17%) industries where the majority of strikes from these industries were wage related benefits.
- Asked if replacement labour was used during workplace disputes, 78% of employers reported that they never used replacement labour during the period of strike and lockouts while 22% of employers reported they replaced labour during the strikes. Most of the employers who reported to have used replacement labour were from the community, manufacturing and trade industries.
- In 2022, the AMCU trade union had the majority at 29.8% of strikers meanwhile the NUM strikers constituted about 25.1% of employees who participated in strike action because of wage demands and better working conditions over the same period. Amongst the AMCU strikers, most employees came from the mining industry in the Impala and Sibanye gold mine that spend months outside work to demand for wage related benefits. Previously, it was mostly NUMSA strikers in 2021 from the mining industry.
- The median wage was settled at an average of 6.2% across all industries in 2022, as reported by the Labour Research Service (LRS). The agriculture, construction, community transport, manufacturing and utility industries settled close to the average margin at 6% respectively. Meanwhile the trade (7%) and mining (8%) industries have settled above the national average median wage agreements while the finance industry recorded the lowest media settlement rate at 5% in 2022. Even though

the average median settlement was at 6%, wage negotiations in 2022 presented that some union representatives managed to settle closer to and above the employers' wage offers, e.g., the NUMSA secured a 6.5% wage increase across the board - on basic pay and allowances for its members from the employer's offer of 6%.

The impact of 2022 strike incidents in the South African society

As previously said, the poor working class are mostly affected during the strike season. Higher inflation and interest rates[1] are condware to more wage negotiations and labour disputes. The lower income group's inflation basket tends to be heavily skewed towards transport, food, education and any significant price rise in those elements and has a much bigger impact on poor households. Furthermore, the property taxes, water and health insurance, along with school and security service fees are also essentially an additional burden to the strikers in South Africa. With limited income and stagnancy associated with slow economic growth, the duration of industrial actions may be significant because of the degree of living conditions.

1 While inflation remains high and far outside the 3% to 6% target range set by the South African Reserve Bank, it was at the lowest point in the nine months and was expected to drop further.

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Employment and Labour monitors the labour disputes in the country to improve on the working conditions between employers and employees. Work stoppages happen when there is no agreement between the parties on a specific matter that could enhance productivity, profit and living conditions. While the strike as such cannot be eliminated, much can be done to shorten its duration and to minimize its impact on the community without encroaching on basic human rights and individual freedoms.

Work stoppages is an inconvenience to both the employers and employees as it has dire consequences for nearly every part of the society from education, to public safety, health services and the economic system in the country. Large and small businesses alike are losing money and thus endangering investment and economic recovery. There is a sense of despair that the situation does not seem to be improving and that there appears to be no end in sight to this matter as workers remain steadfast in their demand for a better life and livelihood. Emanating from the above, high levels of industrial action pose a serious challenge to the government, business and society at large across the world. "The multiple global crises have led to a decline in real wages. It has placed tens of millions of workers in a dire situation[2].

For the past years, our society was devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic that caused much hardship. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic has no doubt affected employees and employers negatively with serious economic strain. Although the pandemic may have subsided, the country's economic recovery has not improved. Our country has for many months of 2022 endured debilitating electricity shortage that has caused immense damage to the economy. The excessive load shedding has also amplified the cost of living for the working class, while successive interest rate increases have intensified the hardships on workers already struggling to meet their basic needs that arose in the absence of meaningful salary increases.

In the plight to fight the triple challenges of high unemployment, poverty alleviation and reducing inequality, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 aims to raise the living standards to the minimum level and thus proposed in the plan to involve a combination of increasing employment, higher incomes through productivity growth and a social wage.

With that being said, the purpose of this industrial report is to analyze and gauge the level of the labour market stability in the South African economy with regards to labour disputes at a given period. Information on strikes and lockouts is collected using the LRA 9.2 form from the affected employers by labour disputes. The number of disputes (strike or lockouts), employees involved and working days lost; working days lost per 1 000 employees, cause of dispute and duration of strike are amongst the indicators analyzed in this annual industrial report in 2022. This reflects on a comparative analysis over five years (2018 to 2022) mainly on some selected indicators.

Data collection

Strike data collection methods were identified though media, other institutions and affected companies where strikes took place. Employers were contacted and requested to complete and submit the LRA 9.2 form 7 days after the strike has ended. Strike data is then captured, verified and updated into an internal strike database system in the Labour Market Information and Statistics directorate at Head Office.

Layout

The annual industrial action report 2022 contains three main chapters. The **First Chapter** looks at the key features of the South African strike trends. In particular, it gives an overview of strikes in terms of total number of work stoppages, working days lost per 1 000 employees, duration of strikes and worker's wage lost as a proxy of the economic impact of the strikes in the country in a form of loss of revenue. The **Second Chapter** of the report illustrates the strikes activities in respect of industries and the trade union membership in terms of strike determination rate. It also reflects on the working days lost per union proportion, causes of the strike and establishment of the industries affected by the strikes and nature of work stoppages. The **Third Chapter** outlines the analysis on the median wage settled by industry and reports on the different ways in which wage settlements agreements were concluded between the employers and union organizations. In the **Annexure,**

2 Mail & Guardian, March 17 to 23 2023, p.6

a detailed breakdown of strike activities are presented as per the Department of Employment and Labour's media monitoring tool in the last twelve months of 2022.

CHAPTER ONE

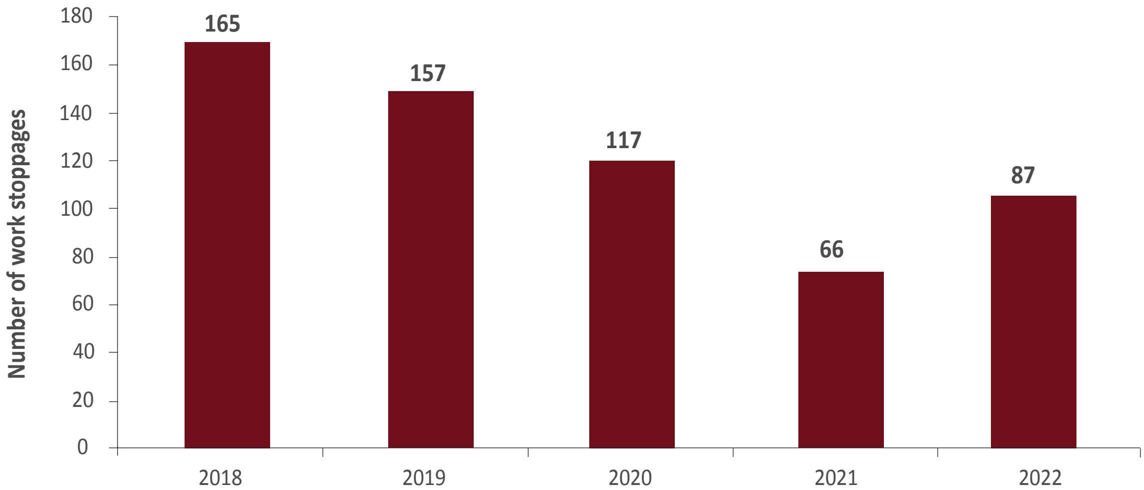
OVERVIEW OF THE FIVE YEAR INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR MARKET, 2018 - 2022

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE FIVE YEAR INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR MARKET, 2018 - 2022

Higher living costs will always bring discontent in the community in particular at the workplaces. Amongst workers, frequent strike action is a common tool that arises when there is no agreement for workers to demand better pay from their employers. In South Africa, thousands of workers went on strike walkouts amid a concerted call by some unions for employers to raise wages due to high inflation and interest hikes. Thus, strike data is an important information in the description of the level of disputes that affected the labour market. The Industrial Action report therefore presents the changes in the number of work stoppages, workdays lost, work hours lost, wages lost and other strike related indicators of the South African labour market. It shows trends and patterns in work stoppage occurrences over time. The level of compliance on protected and unprotected strike incidents amongst others are also looked into.

Key to our findings in the 2022 strikes report was that, the number of strike activities were higher and increased to 87 in 2022 from 66 strikes in 2021. It increased by almost 32% over the same period. The primary reason provided for the increase in the number of strikes is that inflation, recorded at 7.2% in December 2022 remain well above the South African Reserve Bank's target band of 3% to 6%. With the depreciation of the rand, it was unlikely that inflation, especially of imported goods such as fuel would fall by much any time soon. Furthermore, the opening of the economy to full operation has led to an increase in the strike activities and worker's participation in the streets to exercise their rights over work related disputes. In this context, the public sector was worst hit by strikes compared to the private sector in 2022.

Figure 1: Trends in the number of work stopagges in South Africa, 2018 - 2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018-2022

The year 2022 has been very eventful with many economic related challenges that needed immediate attention to be addressed by both unions and employers. According to **Figure 1** the trade union has logged at least 87 disputes in different industries, including the community, manufacturing, mining and transport industries indicating that more and more workers are challenging below-inflation pay offers. The number of strikes increased by 32% from 66 strikes recorded in 2021 to 87 strikes in 2022. Eventful as it was, the total number of employees involved has also increased from 90 299 to 153 527 over the same period. This represents almost 69% of workers' participation growth between 2021 and 2022. The changes in the number of work stoppages resulted in the demand of higher wages, bonus and other compensation benefits. As the honourable President of the Republic has alluded in his State of the Nation Address last year, there is a serious need to continue to forge a comprehensive social compact that would join all social partners in a common programme to rebuild the economy and enable higher growth in the South African society.

Figure 2: Quarterly labour disputes and employees involved, 2019-2022

	2019 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2020 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q41	2021 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2022 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Participants	45 979	27 345	51 085	19 166	46 435	10 003	26 747	18 527	16 403	8 445	46 99	18 551	9 514	48 543	55 170	40 300
strikes	46	42	50	19	37	18	31	31	24	19	10	13	21	29	21	16

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2019-2022

Interestingly, the labour disputes and employees involved illustrates a strong correlation over time as shown in **Figure 2.** From quarter one of 2019 to quarter four of 2022, the number of strikes recorded in the South African labour market is associated with the number of employees involved. This could imply that there is still a growing willingness to use strikes to force companies to match soaring price inflation. One reason is that wages have been held back for a very long time and many of workers are really struggling in the South African labour market. In other words, workers should not be paying the price for economic factors out of their control.

Table 1: Distribution of employee's participation in work stoppage by industry[3], 2022

Industry	Number of workforce 2022*	Employees involved 2022	Percentage distribution of employees involved per sector
Agriculture	4 369	4 186	95.8
Mining	75 872	73 040	96.2
Manufacturing	27 599	11 579	41.9
Utilities	37 970	2 763	7.2
Construction	0	0	0.0
Trade	16 371	12 057	73.6
Transport	58 187	24 063	41.3
Finance	12 093	3 919	32.4
Community	1 650 580	21 920	1.32
Total	**1 883 041**	**153 527**	**8.1**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022 *the statistics as reported by employers using the LRA 9.2 forms

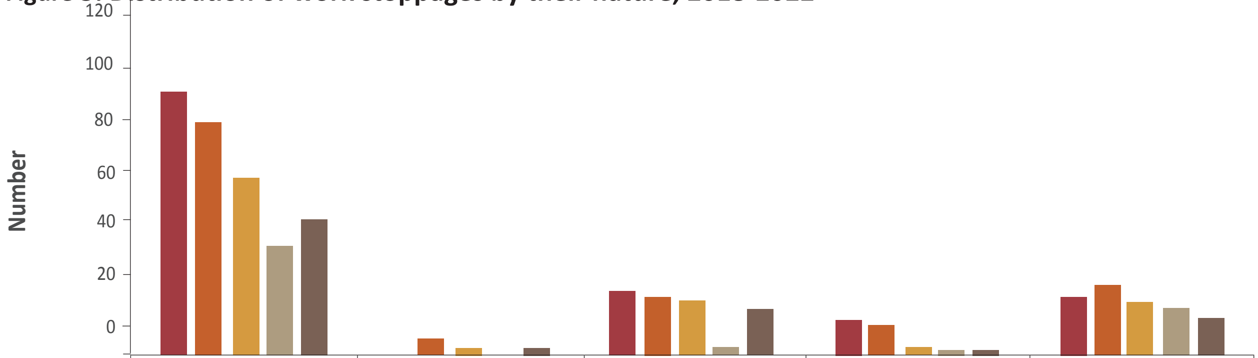
The results in Table 1 above can be translated into low productivity growth across industry. The higher the participation rate into strike, the lower the production rate for the duration of strike that might reduce the companies' competitiveness and inability to create decent work in the short-run. While the average participation rate stood at 8.1% in December 2022, the mining, agriculture and trade industries display higher participation rate (more than 70%) into strike over the same period[4].

3 As per the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC).
4 The number of workers included those directly involved in the dispute as well as who were locked out from the work establishment by the employers.

Striking employees are at risk of losing not only wages but also other benefits if the strike drags on for an extended period. If an employee is a union member and does not want to partake in the strike, they could be at risk of being intimidated by members of the union. Members belonging to a union in a protected strike are generally protected from dismissal but to some extend the threat of “no-work, no-pay” principle is applied on members who are already struggling financially.

Overall, about 8.1% in 2022 compared to 42% of workers in 2021 went out to challenge their employers demanding higher wages and better working conditions. In 2022, only a few members from the community industry’s public sector unions in the country participated on a wage strike. The Public Servants Association (PSA) as one of South Africa’s largest labour unions led the work stoppage calling for wage hike. Unfortunately, the strike was not fully supported as other PSA members believes that the participation in the strike action was not going to be beneficial and that could leave them worse off financially at the end.

Figure 3: Distribution of work stoppages by their nature, 2018-2022



	Strike in company only	Picketing	Stay away/Protest	Multi-employers strike	Lockouts
2018	102	0	25	14	24
2019	90	5	23	12	27
2020	69	3	22	4	19
2021	43	0	4	1	18
2022	53	2	17	1	14

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022 (excluding secondary data)

On the distribution of work stoppages by their nature, the trend in **Figure 3** illustrates that strikes continued to emanate mostly in company only, stay away and lockouts strikes in most companies over the years. This information is directly drawn from the LRA 9.2 forms indicating that about 61% of the total strikes were reportedly from company only while the stay away strikes recorded 19% and lockout strikes were at 16% in 2022. Since 2021, the proportion of stay aways has considerably been on the increase with 19% strikes recorded in 2022. Records on strike in company only were mostly reported in the community and manufacturing industries in 2021 while records on lockouts were also noticeable from the manufacturing industries in 2022. Lockout strikes occur when the employers deny the striking workers access to the workplace premises because of being on strike.

A standout point is that many companies’ constraints need to be resolved to enable worker’s productivity improvements in key industries with strong linkages to employment opportunities. The organization should promote employee motivation and high productivity. If strike go on for too long, the organization can lose a significant amount of profit and reduce worker’s disposable income.

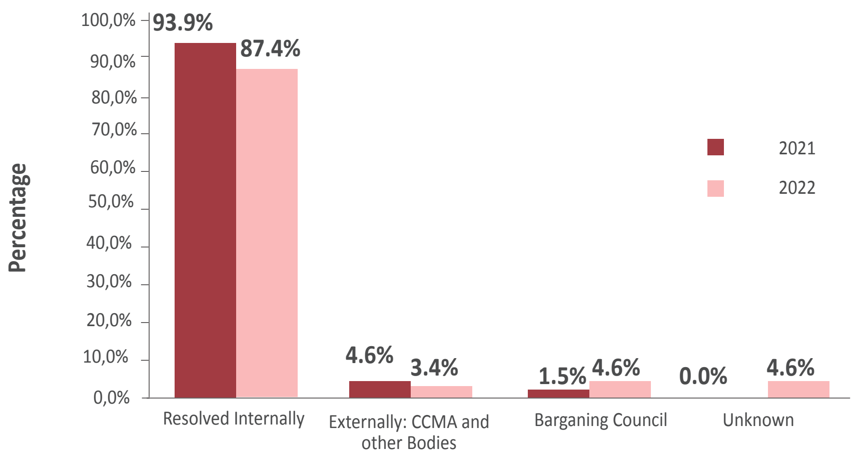
Table 2: Distribution of working days lost by principal cause of disputes, 2018-2022.

Principal cause	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Wages, bonus and other compensation benefits	789 198	1 986 636	624 960	522 529	3 152 216
Working conditions	128 890	221 475	18 700	27 071	39 919
Disciplinary matters	22 729	3 437	1 320	11 386	1 140
Grievances	139 762	98 913	82 123	22 860	5 866
Socio-economic and political conditions	15 708	117 477	6 979	19 799	3 028
Secondary actions	0	1 250	33 068	0	18 396
Retrenchment/redundancy	11 840	890	130	16 112	0
Refusal to bargain	13 313	119	2 573	6 546	25 053
Trade union recognition	11 304	38 195	2 428	8 449	7 800
Other reasons	26 201	27 486	11 664	62 094	90 219
Total	**1 158 945**	**2 495 878**	**783 945**	**696 846**	**3 343 637**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022

As indicated above, employers and employees may have different expectations on wages adjustments, often leading to labour disputes, as the trends are generally observed worldwide. The main reason is associated to economic causes and are normal reasons for the workers to request more wage to meet the increasing average cost of basic items list. **Table 2** above, demonstrates that over the period 2018 to 2022, most workers who participated in strikes had reported that demand for wage, bonus and other compensation benefits was the main reason to participate in work stoppages. A large number of unhappy employees (94.2%) in 2022 lost their time of work to demonstrate mainly for higher wages. This follows a notion that an unhappy worker who is unable to meet financial needs will be less productive at a workplace. On the other hand, the demand for better working conditions and other work related reasons (3.8%) resulted in the cause for participation to labour disputes.

Figure 4: Percentage distribution of how disputes were resolved, 2021-2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022

Disputes are resolved in relation to the forms of pressure exerted by one side or the other union members to employers. This is about the collective bargaining status of the parties in relation to the types of labour disputes. Results in **Figure 4** show a slight decrease between 2021 and 2022 in the proportion of workplace disputes resolved internally without the involvement of external parties. However, in all forms of how disputes were resolved in the workplace, employers had shown high commitment to resolve disputes internally. This constituted about 87.4% of the total strikes in 2022 followed with disputes resolved through the Bargaining councils[5] and not specified bodies at 4.6%, respectively. The CCMA's intervention as an external body to resolve workplace disputes in 2022 dropped from 4.6% in 2021 to 3.4% of the total strikes in 2022.

5 The Bargaining councils has also reflected that the 2022 negotiations were a delicate balancing act for the companies being mindful not only of the affordability and sustainability of the wage increases for the businesses but also having a full appreciation of the cost pressures that workers were facing.

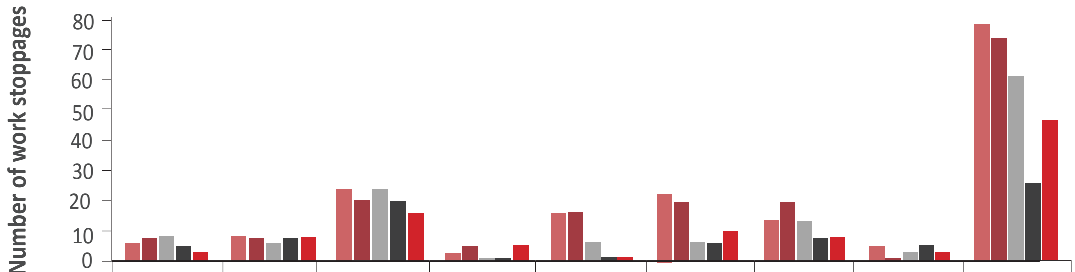
Table 3: Distribution of how annual salary increments were negotiated in South Africa

	Oct-Dec 2021	Jan-March 2022	Apr-June 2022	July-Sep 2022	Oct-Dec 2022	Year on Year change (%)
Individual and employer	1 124 000	965 000	1 116 000	1 105 000	1 132 000	0.7%
Union and employer	2 781 000	2 782 000	2 942 000	3 055 000	3 001 000	7.9%
Bargaining council	1 075 000	1 116 000	1 198 000	1 227 000	1 186 000	10.3%
Employer only	**6 308 000**	**6 706 000**	**7 090 000**	**7 005 000**	**7 276 000**	**15.3%**
No regular increments	717 000	816 000	668 000	665 000	698 000	-2.6%
Unspecified	29 000	33 000	25 000	22 000	64 000	120.7%

Source: Statistics South Africa, QLFS, Quarter 4 of 2022

Table 3 reports on how annual salary increments were negotiated in South Africa. The trend in wage disputes approach settlement has been kept unchanged as sourced from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS). A significant number of respondents has indicated that salary increments were negotiated and agreed with the employer only. This represents about 15.3% year on year change. It was followed by the level of salary increment negotiated between the union and employer and the bargaining councils in 2022. Either way, bargaining can involve one or more trade unions or worker organizations, but only one employer. Even though there was some improvement in the proportion of the salary increments resolved between individuals and the employer from 2021 to 2022, the proportions remained quite low compared to the other workplace forums of negotiating salary increments.

Figure 5: Distribution of work stoppages by industry, 2018-2022



	Agriculture	Mining	Manufactu ring	Utilities	Constru- ction	Trade	Transport	Finance	Comm unity
2018	5	7	23	2	15	21	12	3	77
2019	6	7	19	3	15	17	17	0	73
2020	7	5	23	0	4	5	12	1	60
2021	4	6	19	0	0	5	6	2	24
2022	2	7	15	3	0	7	7	1	45

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018-2022

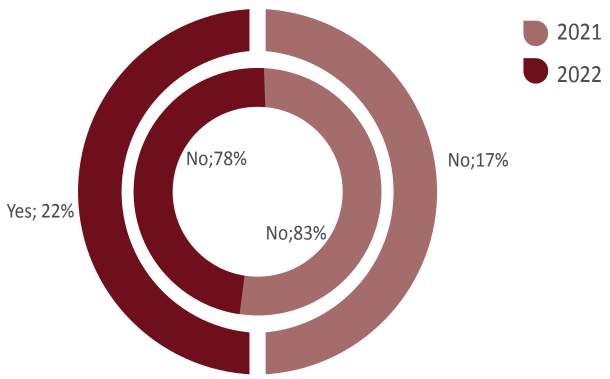
In South Africa, the levels of unionization are relatively very high and that increases the likelihood of industrial action in dispute resolution. Such action can be extremely disruptive to the industry/ sector in terms of cost and reputation. The results in **Figure 5** illustrate the trend in workplace disputes by industry over the past five years. The community and manufacturing industries display a common high trend in terms of labour conflicts over the same period.

With the rise of number of strike in 2022, the number of work stoppages in the community industry also increased higher than all industries. The work stoppage in the community industry almost doubled with an increase of 87.5% strike incidents from 24 strikes in the previous year to 45 strike incidents in 2022. Most (66%) of the community industry disputes occurred in the first and the second quarter of 2022 where workers were demanding wage hike and better working conditions. Unions and employees were putting pressure on their respective employers with strike actions because in the previous negotiations with public sector workers no acceptable offer was put forward but instead wanted to unilaterally increase the wages[6].

The second highest number of work stoppages were recorded from the manufacturing with 17% of strike incidents. Most of the strikes in this sector emanated from the manufacture of food products, beverages and tobacco products and the manufacture of basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery and equipment. Other industries that also saw a rise in workplace disputes were the mining, trade, utility and transport industries. The utilities' municipal services such as water supply, waste water treatment and sewerage infrastructure have been hit due to Eskom's employee's strike.

Furthermore data recorded from the employers also show a decline in the number of work stoppages from the manufacturing (4), agriculture (2) and finance (1) industries. While all industries were hit by work stoppages in 2022, no strike was identified from the construction industry.

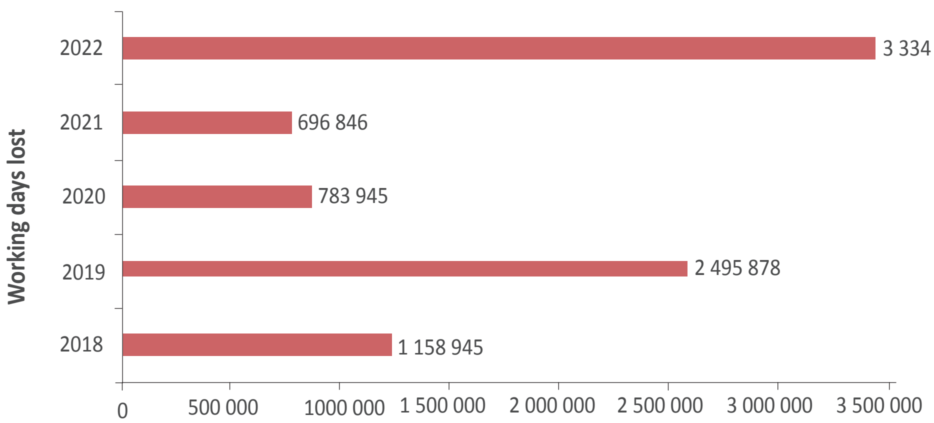
Figure 6: Percentage distribution of replacement labour used during the strikes, 2021-2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2021-2022

Interest has grown to understand if replacement of labour was used during the labour disputes. In **Figure 6**, 78% of employers reported that they never used replacement during the period of strike and lockouts while 22% of employers reported they replaced labour during the strikes for the sustainable production or service delivery. Most of the applied replacement labour were from the community (21%), manufacturing (42%) and trade (31%) industries. The trade industry that used replacement of labour constituted mainly from the tourism agencies and the retail stores such as Massmart companies where workers went on strike to demand for higher wages.

Figure 7: Trends in working days lost[7] in South Africa, 2018-2022



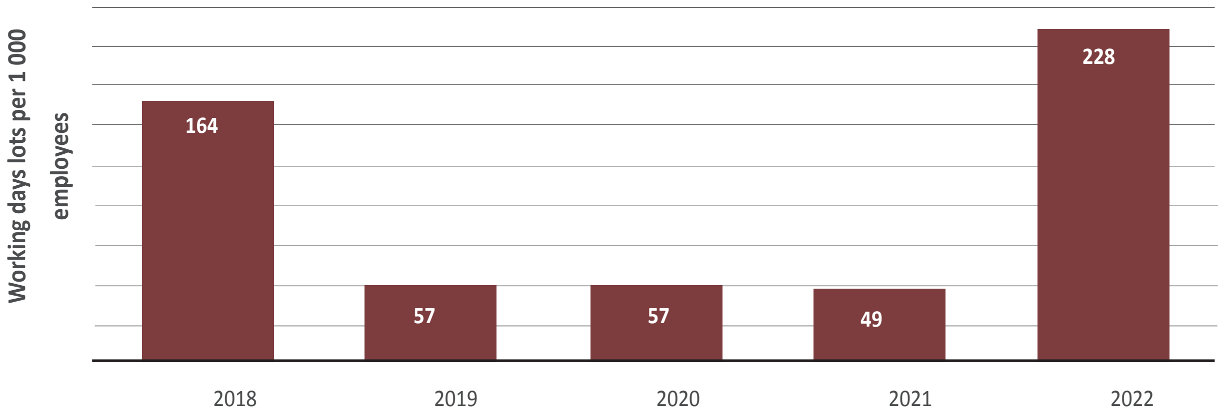
Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018-2022

6 The strike for better wages and conditions by thousands of Public Service Administration (PSA) employees took place at various centres around the country on 10 November 2022 where unions demanded a wage increase of up to 10% after government said it can only afford 3%. This was the first time in a decade that the PSA of South Africa took to the street in a protest over wages.

7 The working days lost due to strike implies the total number of workers involved directly in the strikes or lockouts multiplies by the length of work stoppage. These are of little use purposes of international comparisons. The number of days not worked per 1 000 employees will be the best estimate for such international comparison.

In December 2022, approximately 3 334 637 working days were lost due to labour disputes in South Africa, far above during the COVID-19-pandemic in 2020 with an average of 783 945 working days lost and 1 158 945 working days lost in the country in 2018. Working days lost is a measure of the length of a dispute, relative to the number of employees involved. **Figure 7** shows the working day lost rates have increases by 4.8% in 2022 compared to the previous year. The figure indicates that around 2021 there were 783 945 of days lost to 66 strikes to 3 343 637 working days from 87 strikes in 2022. The increase in the 2022 working days lost emanated from more employees who participated in strikes. The highest number of working days lost were recorded from the mining industry where more than 25 000 employees from the mining of gold and uranium ore downed tools for close to two and a half months trying to negotiate on a wage hike with the employer.

Figure 8: Working days lost per 1 000[8]employees (time-loss ratio) due to strikes, 2018-2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database 2018-2022

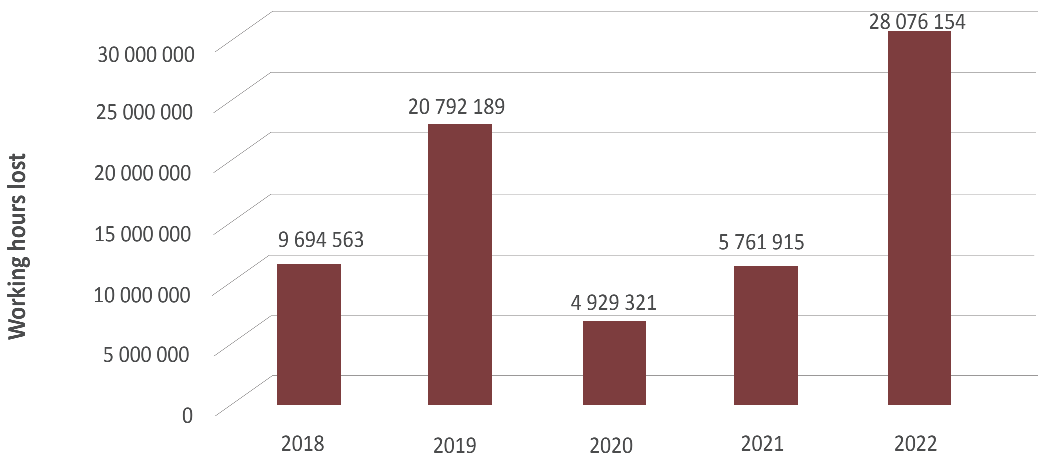
When interpreting international comparisons of labour disputes, it should be noted that an exact comparison between countries is not possible. There are important differences in the methods used to compile statistics in individual countries (ILO, 1993). In the literature, an estimate on the number of working days lost per 1 000 employees is used for international comparison to identify strike prominence between countries. In this case, the time loss ratio was at 228 days per 1 000 employees in South Africa in December 2022, as shown in **Figure 8** above. This was almost five times higher than in 2021 and relatively two times higher than in 2018.

Furthermore, working days lost per 1 000 employees was largely affected by workers in the mining, transport and utility industries in December 2022. The effect of the mining industry strikes resulted from 73 040 or 96.2% of the total workforce reported by employers where 2 120 713 working days lost was also recorded. All in all, the strike results showed remarkable stability in terms of working days per 1 000 employees from 2019-2021 in South Africa[9].

8 This indicator allows for international comparison in strike activity where data is available. For international comparison, the ratio distinguishes which country is “strike-prone” when compared to another country.

9 There are many factors influencing strike activity. They include macroeconomic effects as well as political and institutional factors, country-specific characteristics and the historical context (Batstone 1985; Goerke and Madsen 2004). In strike-prone Southern Europe and in France, strike activity is particularly influenced by the political sphere. Mass strikes are part of a social movement for democratic and social rights (Nowak and Gallas 2004).

Figure 9: Trends in working hours lost in South Africa, 2018 - 2022

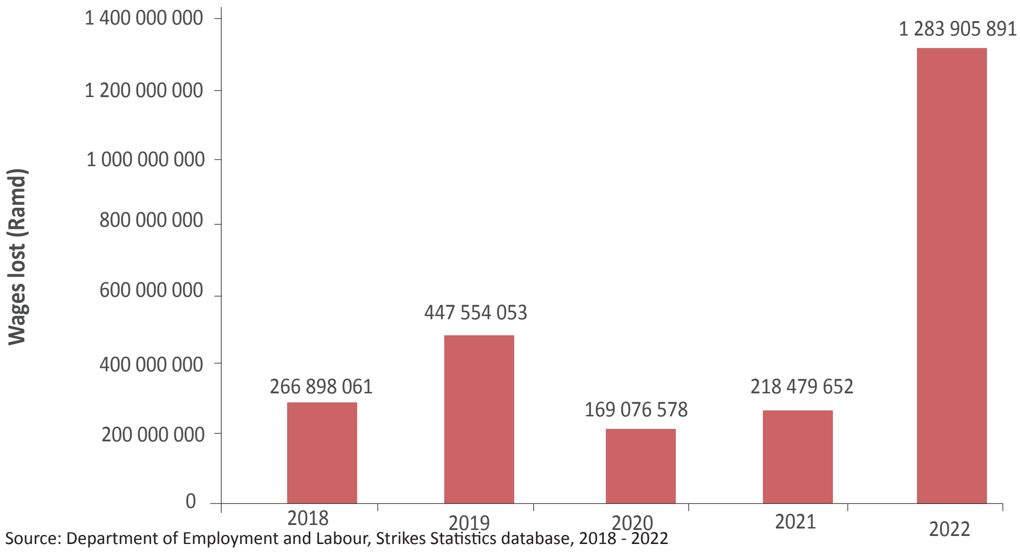


Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database 2018 - 2022

Estimates on the working hours lost due to labour disputes from 2018 to 2022, are shown in **Figure 9**. The results show more working hours lost in 2022 than other years since 2018. This is approximately four times higher than the number of working hours lost during the year 2021. The labour market because of a high number of strike activities in the second and third quarters of 2022 resulted in a high number of working hours lost. In 2022, as millions of workers had returned to work or switched to working from home, the situation had worsened significantly, as workers were free to participate in strike actions to demand better wages and working conditions.

Most working hours lost from the private sector emanated from the mining industry where workers from the Sibanye Waters embarked on a two and a half months. In addition, the South African Revenue Services (SARS) officials who embarked on a month and half-long strike demanding higher wages.

Figure 10: Wages lost [10] due to work stoppages in South Africa, 2018 - 2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018 - 2022

For the purpose of this labour dispute report, the focus is on workers' wages lost as reported by the employers. In this context, if employees knew what it was going to cost them they would probably never follow the call to strike. However, the acceptance to participate to strike comes with a cost of "no work no pay" principle. Therefore, while assessing the wage lost due to industrial dispute is at best to understand the "multiplier effect" to the worker's family and community during the strike incident.

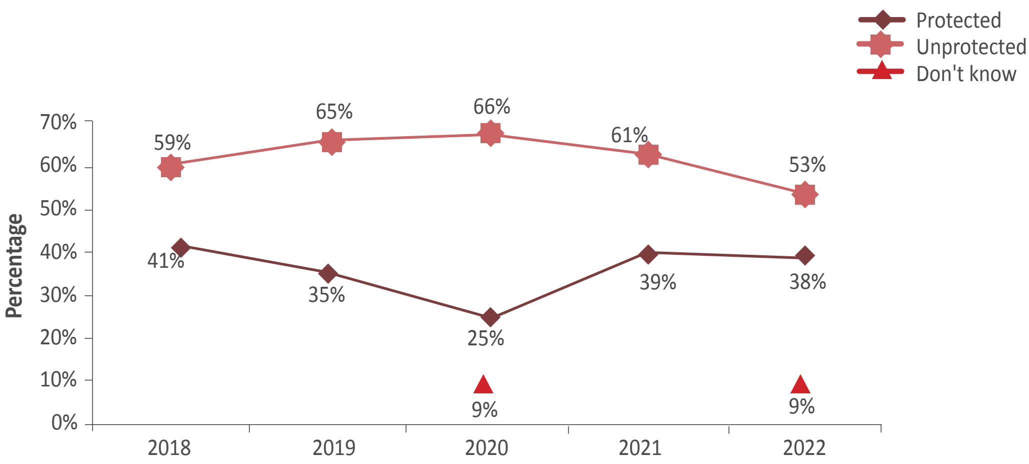
10 There is a need for a case study to gather data from a number of companies that were affected by the strike activity in order to estimate the cost of strike to company. This can be a case study for the Research unit in the future.

What we observe is that food and energy prices are fuelling the cost of living crisis around the world and the poor are being hardest hit. In South Africa, food prices have increased on average by 12% over the past year. Rising inflation for example, led to higher wage demands as workers feel they needed to be compensated for the expected rise.

Figure 10 demonstrates that from the 87 strikes recorded in 2022, workers lost more than R1.2 billion of wages for participating in strikes. This is 7.6% more than R218 millions of wages lost from 66 strikes in 2021. This emanated from the pressure on the worker's financial position given the rising interest rates, the soaring costs of food and fuel. The low-point of wage lost during the last five-year analysis is in 2020. It remains relatively low while it coincided with the global economic slowdown and COVID-19 pandemic lockdown restrictions. Nearly 117 strikes were recorded in 2020 with 101 712 employees involved into the strike.

Besides, as the economic growth slide down, spending pressure climbed up and higher wage demand went up. The poor performance of the economy remains an area of concern as workers participate on strike for better wages and thus, probably forfeit salary for the duration of strike. The significant increase in wages lost in 2022 came from the large number of employees involved in the mining (96.2%) and manufacturing (41.9%) industries of the total workforce in December 2022.

Figure 11: Percentage distribution of the protected and unprotected strikes in South Africa, 2018 - 2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018 - 2022

To determine compliance with Labour Relations Act (LRA), employers had three answers related to the question: *Was the action in compliance with the Act?* Only 53% of strikes were reported to be unprotected, 38% were protected and employers did not specify at 9%, as illustrated in **Figure 11.** This is an overall decrease of 8% between 2021 and 2022. Higher levels of un-procedural strike activities were reported from the community sector's local authorities, health and social services and the security services. While the participation in a strike which is not protected may constitute a fair reason for dismissal, the decline in the number of unprotected strikes is embraced as a sign of leadership by unions to have taken responsibility to implement steps of good governance to obtain a certificate of notice to strike from the CCMA.

Compliance on regulations to strike act as a preventative measure to avoid dismissals at the workplace. Despite compliance to the regulations, the small decrease in the number of unprotected strikes remain a concern. The Department of Employment and Labour is however confident that upon advocacies with the employer organizations and the unions, high levels of up-procedural strikes will continue to drop. Over the past two year, the results indicate a drop of 1 % percentage point of protected strikes between 2021 and 2022.

CHAPTER TWO

ANALYSIS OF THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LABOUR DISPUTES, 2021 AND 2022

CHAPTER TWO: ANALYSIS OF THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LABOUR DISPUTES, 2021 AND 2022

In terms of details characteristics of the labour disputes, this chapter disaggregating the strikes incidents in the South African labour market by industry, duration employment size, and trade union involvement in work stoppages in the last two years (2021 and 2022).

2.1. Industrial distribution of work stoppages and wages lost by industry, 2021 - 2022

Table 4: Distribution of work stoppages and wages lost by industry, 2021 - 2022

Industry*	No. of work stoppages 2021	Worker's wage lost (Total 2021 (Rand's)	No. of work stoppages 2022	Worker's wage lost (Total 2022 (Rand's)
Agriculture	4	2 008 509	2	2 229 486
Mining	6	38 845 379	7	1 018 444 218
Manufacturing	19	138 544 426	15	109 024 078
Utilities	0	0	3	14 877 553
Construction	0	0	0	0
Trade	5	5 737 862	7	10 501 221
Transport	6	2 124 775	7	86 087 232
Finance	2	493 117	1	37 983 763
Community	24	30 725 584	45	4 758 340
Total	**66**	**218 479 652**	**87**	**1 283 905 891**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2021 - 2022
*Note that the Standard International Classification (SIC) was used (excluding the Private household sector).

Strikes working days lost has an impact on the wages of employees, cost of production and profits on the employers. During the period from 2021 to 2022, a number of changes occurred in terms of the strikes activities. Of the nine industries affected by work stoppages, only one industry (construction) was not affected by the strikes' actions ever the same period.

According to **Table 4**, the industry with the highest number of strike actions was the community industry whereas the mining industry had overtaken with the largest number of participants in the work stoppages. The mining industry with few strikes recorded the highest (79.3%) wage loss in 2022. On 5 October 2022, workers affiliated with the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) embarked on a national strike relating to a dispute over salary increases for the next three years. The strike has left employers on the edge because of the duration strike. The manufacturing industry that was second hit with strike incidents lost 8% of wages in 2022 while the community industry that recorded a largest number of work stoppages lost only 0.3% of total wages.

On the other hand, the utility industry was hit by the power supply's Eskom strike whose employees embarked on a wildcat strikes and protests over wage increment at nine of its power stations and caused 'operational disturbances' raising the spectre of even more load shedding and rolling blackouts. These actions came in the wake of wage talks deadlocking between the unions and the employer.

2.2. Industrial distribution of working days lost, 2021 - 2022

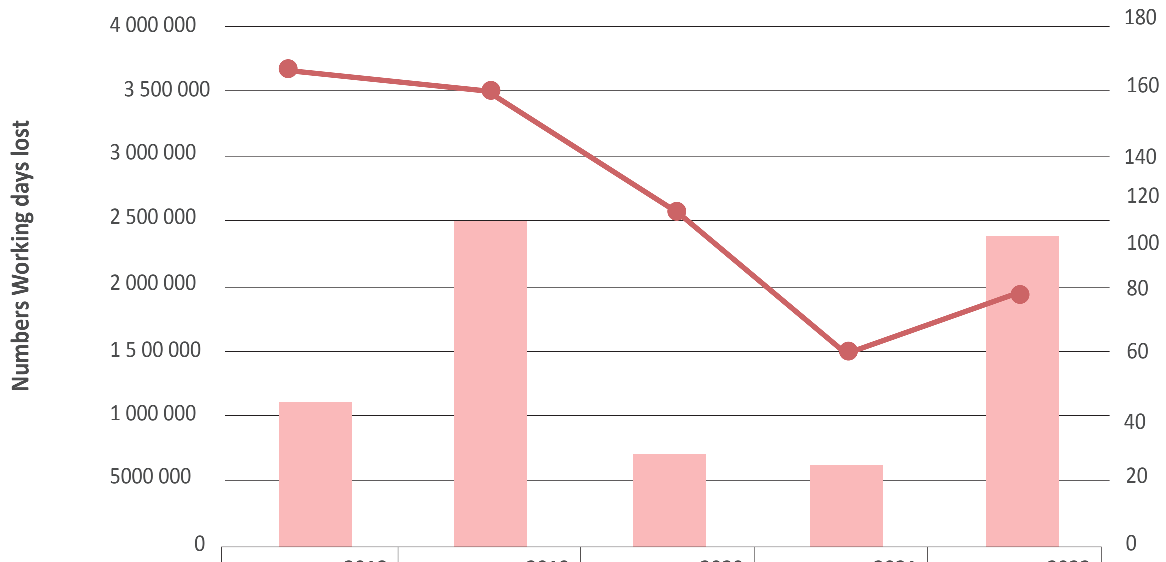
Table 5: Distribution of working days lost by industry, 2021 - 2022

Industry		Working days lost 2022	
	2021	2022	% change
Agriculture	32 590	40 632	24.7
Mining	63 027	2 120 713	3 264.8
Manufacturing	413 720	303 930	-26.5
Utilities	0	32 979	0.0
Construction	0	0	0.0
Trade	83 742	89 765	7.2
Transport	14 746	274 230	1 759.7
Finance	9 621	207 707	2 058.9
Community	79 400	273 681	244.7
Total	**696 846**	**3 343 637**	**379.8**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2021-2022

In general, the total number of working days lost shows an increase in 2022 as compared to 2021. As demonstrated in **Table 5,** the results reflect an increase of 379.8% in the working days lost between 2021 and 2022. It has been reported that talks on pay increases and other working conditions prolonged, as there was the number negotiations with no signal from employers that they want to find a solution at all. The duration of strike and employees involved across industry could explain the explosion of working days lost in 2022. For example, working days' loss of 63% of total working days lost in 2022 in the mining industry has had a negative impact in the metal ores while it contributes about 2% to the South African economic output and it is responsible for 190 000 direct jobs. The manufacturing industry, on the other hand, recorded the second largest number of work stoppages lost but recorded 9.1% of total working days lost in 2022. Within the broader labour market, the patterns in the number of working days lost were associated with the patterns on the number of employees in the formal sector.

Figure 12: Trend in the working days lost and number of strikes, 2018-2022



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Working days lost	1 158 945	2 495 878	783 945	696 846	3 343 637
No.strikes and lockouts	165	157	117	66	87

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018-2022

As highlighted in **Figure 12,** the trend in the number of days lost have increased relative to the number of work stoppages between 2021 and 2022. The impact of this movement could mean that employees have lost their pay due to the no work, "no pay principle" and if the strikers unlawfully participated could face dismissal and impact on their livelihoods.

2.3. Industrial distribution of working hours lost, 2021 - 2022

Table 6: Distribution of working hours lost by industry, 2021 - 2022

Industry*	Working hours lost 2022		
	2021	2022	% change
Agriculture	273 477	336 888	23.1
Mining	523 968	17 667 327	3 271.8
Manufacturing	3 392 924	2 903 282	-14.4
Utilities	0	377 504	0.0
Construction	0	0	0.0
Trade	726 026	740 968	2.0
Transport	129 696	2 184 137	1 584.0
Finance	76 968	1 869 363	2 328.7
Community	638 856	1 996 685	212.5
Total	**5 761 915**	**28 076 154**	**387.2**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database; 2021-2022
*Note: The Private household sector is excluded because of zero work stoppages was recorded.

Table 6 reflects the total number of working hours that are accounted from 3 343 637 working days lost in 2022. The findings show that more than 28 million of hours were lost in 2022, which represents an increase of 387% of working hours lost between 2021 and 2022. By industry, the mining industry where there is no bargaining council, followed by the manufacturing, transport, community and finance industries recorded an increase in the number of working hours lost between 2021 and 2022. Workers at South Africa's logistics group Transnet (transport industry) launched an industrial strike over a wage dispute that paralysed and disrupted exports services. Transnet, which was already operating below capacity, failed to come to a wage agreement with the United National Transport Union (Untu) and the South African Transport Allied Workers Union (Satawu), who were demanding wage increase of 12% and 13.5% respectively. Serious concerns were raised after hundreds of trucks were stuck in different ports across the country due to the ongoing strike by Transnet employees. The strike, which lasted for two weeks has been described as more devastating than load shedding as it had immense financial consequences.

2.4. Working days lost per 1 000 employees by industry, 2021-2022

Table 7: Time-loss ratio[11] by industry, 2021-20212

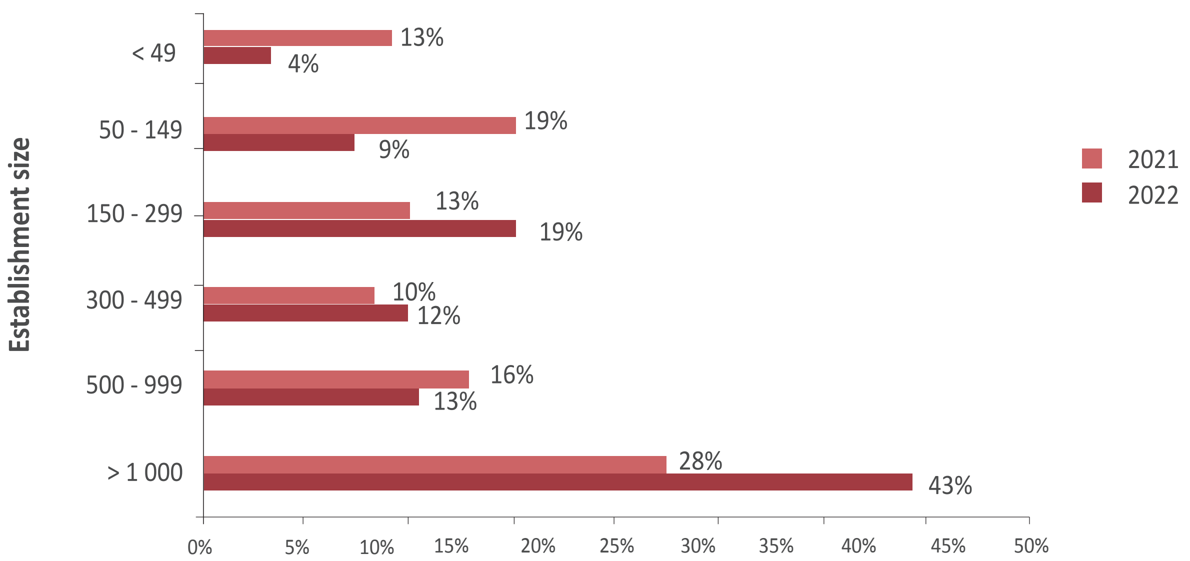
	Time-loss ratio	Total number of workers*	Time-loss ratio	Total number of workers*
Industry (SIC)	**2021**	**2021**	**2022**	**2022**
Agriculture	37.5	868 000	47.2	860 000
Mining	170.3	370 000	4 864.0	436 000
Manufacturing	314.4	1 316 000	183.5	1 656 000
Utilities	0.0	82 000	266.0	124 000
Construction	0.0	1 133 000	0.0	1 212 000
Trade	28.9	2 896 000	28.1	**3 197 000**
Transport	15.5	951 000	279.0	983 000
Finance	4.0	2 404 000	83.6	2 484 000
Community	24.3	**3 264 000**	73.4	**3 727 000**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database **Note:** * Statistics South Africa, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 4 of 2022-Total employment (Private households excluded)

Overall, there were 228 working days lost per 1 000 employees from (3 334 637 working days lost and **153 527** employees involved) in the country in 2022 compared to 49 working days lost per 1 000 employees (696 846 working days lost and 90 299 employees involved) in 2021. In line with the high number of employed persons in the country and high working days lost in 2022, **Table 7** shows that the industry with the highest working days lost per 1 000 employees in 2022 was the mining with 4 864% working days lost per 1 000 employees. This is higher compared with 2021 when the highest rate was 171% working days lost per 1 000 employees. The lowest time- loss ratio was recorded in the trade industry with 28% working days lost followed by the agriculture industry at 47.2%.

2.5. Work stoppages by employment size of establishments, 2021 - 2022

Figure 13: Percentage distribution of work stoppages by employment size, 2021 – 2022



Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2021-2022

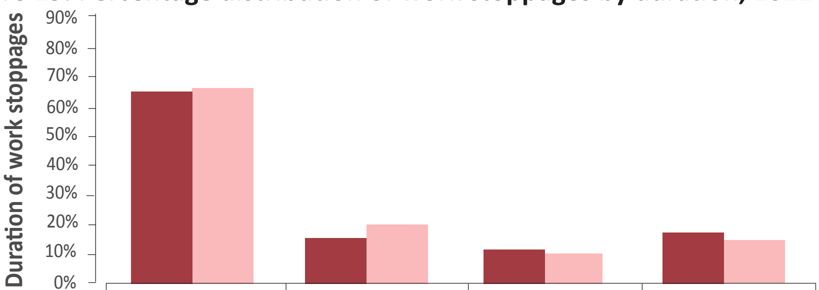
11 This is the measure which best reconciles the number of days lost due to industrial action with the varying sizes of the countries' employed population and provides a reasonable basis for international comparisons. In this report, the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter four of 2020, were used regarding the total number of employees by industry.

The distribution of work stoppages by employment size is another important information in this report. The information recorded from the employers in **Figure 13** indicates that the overall companies with an establishment size of a 1 000 and more employees was highly affected (43%) with strike incidents in 2022 as compared to 28% of strikes in the previous year. There are probably better equipped with strong internal structure and union's leadership with a more mature approach to manage labour disputes but they also suffered higher working days lost during the strike period. On the contrary, small to medium size establishments affected with strike incidents often face consequences of indirect cost that may lead to businesses to close down.

Companies with employment size bigger than 1 000 employees lost more working days from the mining and manufacturing industries where workers embarked on a nation-wide strike over various wages related issues. Small sized (4%) companies with 49 and less and 50 to 149 employees at 9% in 2022 were relatively affected but of a small scale with a minimal share of working days lost.

2.6. Duration of work stoppages, 2021 - 2022

Figure 15: Percentage distribution of work stoppages by duration, 2021 - 2022



	1-10 days	11-20 days	21-30 days	31>
2021	62%	14%	9%	15%
2022	63%	17%	7%	13%

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database 2021-2022

Employers and employees are obliged to try to resolve disputes and only employees to embark on strikes and lockouts as a last resort to try to compel the other side to agree to their demands. In some circumstances, strikes last for as long as the union, with support from the membership, chooses to continue the strike. In this context, the duration of strike can either be prolonged or shortened. In **Figure 15**, an analysis of strike duration is presented as per the information supplied by employers. The results indicate that most of the work stoppages 63% in 2022 and 62% in 2021 lasted between 1-10 working days. Strikes that lasted for 31 days and more (13%) signal that it took longer for unions and employers to find a common agreement in resolving workplace disputes. These were some of the long running disputes over wages, bonuses and compensation in the private sector while the inflation and food and fuel prices were quite erratic in 2022.

2.7. Trade union involvement in work stoppages, 2022

Table 8: Distribution of work days lost by trade union membership involved, 2021 – 2022

Name of the union	Employees involved per trade union in 2021	Days lost per trade union in 2021	%	Employees involved per union in every strike in 2022	Days lost per trade unions in 2022	%
AFADWU	250	4 680	0.67	34	408	0.01
AMCU	**31 904**	**67 680**	**9.71**	**35 273**	**996 211**	**29.79**
CEPPWAWU	190	3 230	0.46	438	15 690	0.47
DEMAWUSA	22	924	0.13	190	1 140	0.03
FAWU	780	26 520	3.81	315	2 261	0.07
FOSAWU	356	15 184	2.18	0	0	0.00
FOSNWU	125	9 178	1.32	0	0	0.00
GIWUSA	1 100	30 540	4.38	1 868	14 747	0.44
HOSPERSA	52	312	0.04	318	2 343	0.07
NEHAWU	550	1 464	0.21	8 985	228 171	6.82
NTM	0	0	0.00	92	4 950	0.15
None reported	26 370	307 323	**44.03**	8 971	75 027	2.24
NONE UNION MEMBERS	**12 871**	**101 868**	**14.60**	**42 836**	**82 418**	**2.46**
NUM	**1 692**	**3 441**	**0.49**	**13 713**	**838 634**	**25.08**
NUMSA	7 845	108 365	**15.55**	7 194	113 948	3.41
NUPSAW	69	1 449	0.21	351	2,346	0.07
NWU	0	0	0.00	500	24 000	0.72
PSA	43	170	0.02	1 723	77 259	2.31
PWUSA	0	0	0.00	474	9 480	0.28
SACCAWU	19	114	0.02	7 801	57 639	1.72
SAEWA	111	2 904	0.42	0	0	0.00
SAICWU	0	0	0.00	1 129	24 659	0.74
SAMWU	3 191	24 795	0.00	2 176	6 011	0.18
SATAWU	408	2 098	0.30	8 032	93 675	2.80
SOLIDARITY	320	5 066	0.73	58	754	0.02
THOR	131	5 371	0.77	0	0	0.00
UASA	1 650	10 630	1.53	911	3 644	0.11
UAWU	250	2 500	0.36	0	0	0.00
UNTU	0	0	0.00	10 145	121 740	3.64

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2021-2022; *Note: Not all LRA 9.2 forms provided accurate estimates in terms of number of employees involved per union membership names. Follow ups were made with employers but limited responses were received by the time of writing the report. Thus, readers should take the "not reported figures" with caution.

Table 8 presents the shares of working days across the trade unions between 2021 and 2022. AMCU (29.79%) and NUM (25.08%) constituted the majority of employees involved in strike actions over wage demands and better working conditions in 2022. In contrast, it was NUMSA (15.5%) who represented the majority of employees involved in strike actions in 2021. Amongst the AMCU members participating in strike actions were employees from the mining sector's Impala and Sibanye gold mine where workers spend months to demand wage related benefits. Interestingly, in 2022, about 2.5% of workers who participated in workplaces disputes were not-unionized in 2022 compared to 14.6% reported in 2021. There is a serious concern though as the BRICS Employment Working Group and the Research Network Forum[12] indicated that trade union membership is declining at an alarming rate in South Africa and now stands at just 23% of all workers.

12 This emerged during their meeting, which ended on Friday 28 February 2023 in Muldersdrift, west of Johannesburg.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAGE SETTLEMENTS, 2022

CHAPTER THREE: THE ROLE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAGE SETTLEMENTS, 2022

In general, Collective bargaining allows the parties to solve problems that may be specific to the industry or workplace. Intended industrial strike action comes in the wake of frustrations over impasse with employers and other related parties. Unions have therefore a responsibility to safeguard collective bargaining and ensure collective bargaining structures are kept in place in advancing worker's rights, conditions of service and other related benefits. This usually occurs when a collective agreement is expiring and needs to be renewed.

Following this, many employees and union representatives are hopeful to bargain equal to their demands. The findings in this chapter reflects on how unions opted to settle the employee's wage demands, avert the strikes and to some extent abandoned the strike actions. As part of the negotiations, companies played it safe and hold back on substantial increases and bonuses to keep the balance sheet stable during these uncertain times. However, most union negotiators have rejected wages offer on the basis that it was below the inflation rate in 2022. Wage negotiators built an argument for higher wages by comparing the current wage to several benchmarks, including inflation rate. Inflation should not dominate wage negotiations, but it is important information to consider in the process of collective bargaining[13].

3.1. Wage settlements concluded after the strikes ended in various industries, 2021 - 2022

Table 9: Median[14] wage settlement in various industries, 2021 - 2022

Industry	2021 (%)	2022 (%)
Agriculture	7.5%	6%
Construction	5%	6%
Mining	6%	**8**%
Manufacturing	5.5%	6%
Utilities	6%	6%
Finance	6%	5%
Transport	8%	6**%**
Trade	6%	7%
Community	5.4%	6%

Source: Labour Research Service, Wage settlements Trends, December 2021- 2022

Median wage settlement is an important information for bargaining cases. The year 2022 proved to have been an exceptionally challenging year for the economy with the rising cost of living due to higher inflation rate, higher interest rates and electricity load shedding that has affected the South African economic growth recovery. The South African Reserve Bank reported that growth in the nominal remuneration per worker in the private sector remained unchanged at 5.7% on a year on year as the average wage settlement rate in collective bargaining agreements came to 6.0% in the first nine months of 2022.

As reported from the Labour Research Service, the median wage in **Table 9** was settled at an average benchmark of 6% across all industries in 2022. This was relatively below the inflation rate at 7.5% in the third quarter of 2022 in South Africa. The agriculture, construction, community transport, manufacturing and utility industries settled close to the average margin at 6% respectively. Meanwhile the trade (7%) and the mining (8%) industries have settled above the national average median wage agreements while the finance industry recorded the lowest media settlement rate at 5% in 2022. Subsequently, the latest data from

13 Having considered the risks of public servants not receiving any salary increases for 2022/2023 financial year due to the processes of wage negotiations that were not concluded in time for the 2022 MTBPS, the Acting Minister for Public Service and Administration indicated that he would be implementing the salary offer of 3% pensionable increase for the public servants that was tabled at the PSCBC following the facilitation process by both trade unions and employer at the PSCBC. This was regarded best in the interest of the public servants and the Government's planning cycle. Upon disagreement with government, Public Servants Association (PSA) opted to go on strike as it has rejected government's proposed 3% salary increase offer because it was believed that the offer and continuation of the R1 000 cash gratuity was not suitable for the economic conditions.
14 The median is the number, which found in the middle of a range of numbers. For example,if the range of numbers is 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 then the median is 10.

BankservAfrica shows that the average take-home salary in South Africa was 4.8% lower in December 2022, marking it difficult for salaries to increase. This comes against the backdrop of rising inflation averaged at 6.9% in 2022[15].

Table 10: Distribution of final wage settlement in selected industries, 2022

Industry	Employer	Agreement Date	Initial Demand	Employer Offer	Settlement	Protected / Unprotected
Community, Social & Personal Services	City Of Tshwane Municipality	22 March 2022	3.5 %	0 %	3.5 %	Unprotected
	Kenilworth Racing (Pty)Ltd	3 January 2022	5 %	5 %	5 %	Protected
	Unisa	14 January 2022	3-7 %	4.2 %	4.2 %	Unprotected
	Unisa	24 May 2022	8 %	4.2%	0 %	Unprotected
	South African Revenue Services	August 2022	12%	0%	1.5%	Protected
Electricity, Water & Gas	Eskom	3 July 2022	15 % and CPI + 2.5 %	4.7 %	7 %	Not Indicated
Manufacturing	Clinisut Akacia	26 August 2022	10 %	5 %	6.69 %	Protected
	RCL Foods Grocery	11 July 2022	103 %	6.7 %	6.7%	Protected
	RCL Foods Group Services Pty Ltd –Pies	3 October 2022	36 %	6.78 %	6.74 %	Protected
	RCL Foods (Sunbake)	29 November 2022	11.22 %	6.4 %	6.9%	Protected
	Trellidor Innovations (Pty) Ltd T/A Taylor Blinds	13 April 2022	42 %	3 %	7 %	Protected
Mining	ArcelorMittal SA Ltd	25 May 2022	10 %	6 %	6.5 %	Protected
	Geomechanics	15 August 2022	10 -35 %	8 %	Based On Years Of Experience	Protected
	Sibanye Still Water	11 June 2022	R1 000	5.5 %	5.5 %	Protected
Transport, Storage & Communications	Transnet	17 October 2022	12 %	1.5 % - 3 %	5.5 % - 6 %	Protected
	Putco	13 September 2022	6%	3 %	6 %	Unprotected
Wholesale and Retail Trade & Restaurants & Hotels	Fruits & Veg (Pty) Ltd	14 February 2022	12%	6.9%	6.69%	Protected
	RCL Foods Group Services Pty Ltd –(Pies)	3 October 2022	36%	6.78%	6.74%	Protected

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022

Table 10 demonstrates how final wage settlements in selected industries were reached in 2022. Not all gets everything they bargained for during the negotiations. Collective negotiation and compromise is even harder because the negotiators are constantly trying to judge what would be acceptable to their representatives. What then becomes important is how the parties can explicitly negotiate compromises that smooth the way back to work using their leadership skills. Even though the average median settlement was at 6% in 2022, wage negotiations presented that some union representatives managed to settle closer to and above the employers' wage offers, e.g., NUMSA. They have agreed to a 6.5%% wage increase across the board-on basic pay and allowances for its members from the employer's offer of 6%. The collective agreement followed after NUMSA had embarked on a two-week strike demanding a 10% wage hike at ArcelorMittal South Africa (AMSA), which is the country's largest steel maker. This agreement was a victory for all NUMSA members who made the ultimate sacrifice to fight for improved wages and conditions. Contrary to what other employee representatives have secured above the employer's offer, others had to settle below or average to what the employer had to offer, as shown in **Table 10** above.

15 BankservAfrica, Take-Home Pay Index, 25 January 2023

3.2. Wage settlements concluded without strike incidents, 2022

In the process of monitoring the labour disputes, some industries and unions have adopted different approach to avoid strikes due to slow economic growth recovery. That allows the likelihood of strengthening labour peace and stability across industry. In this context, some of the industries that have signed two or longer wage agreement terms could breathe a sigh of relief from the cost of living crisis that the country is currently facing.

3.2.1. Averted strike incidents

- The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) averted a strike and signed a **three-year wage** agreement with Vergenoeg Mining Company for the period of 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024. Vergenoeg Mine is one of the largest fluorite mines, which also produces iron ore (Fe-F-REE mineralisation) 40+ minerals (mostly iron). Vergenoeg Mining Company has agreed to pay the following increases over the 3-years from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024. The settlement was reached on the 25 January 2022 as follows:
    - Category A, (B1-B5) and C1 to C2: Year 1-R1 000, Year 2-R1 300 and Year 3-R1 300
    - Category C3 to D2: Year 1-5.0% or R1 000 per month, Year 2-5.5% or R1 300 per month and Year 3-6.0% or R1 300 per month
    - Living Out/Housing Allowance: Year 1 - R5 200, Year 2 - R5 300 and Year 3 - R5 400.

- The two bodies Nehawu and Parliament averted a strike action and concluded the negotiations on 14 January 2022. The agreement includes an annual increase of 1.5% on the total salary package of all employees in the legislative sector for the 2021/22 financial year and a once-off payment of R22 000 (namely R1 833.30 per month for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 March 2022) for all employees in the South African legislative sector. Implementation to be on or before 15 February 2022.

- Road passenger bargaining council Premium (SARPBAC) reported that a strike has been averted in the passenger bus sector after operators and unions reached a 6% wage agreement. The deal rose the sector's minimum wage from R40.43 to R42.85 an hour on 26 April 2022. The agreement was effective from 1 April 2022 and would be in force until March 2023. The NUMSA, SATAWU and the TAWU Unions went back to their members for a mandate after employers who had previously offered 2.5% tabled a revised wage offer of 4.5%on 12 April 2022 after the unions initially sought 11% wage increase.

- The platinum group metals (PGMs) producer Impala Platinum announced on 28 June 2022 that it has signed **a five-year pay hike** deal with the AMCU union. The settlement was effective from 1 July 2022. The pay hike deal assured employees of increases to all major components of remuneration over the next five years including basic salaries, living-out and home-ownership allowances, medical aid and pension fund contributions. It added that the agreement is in line with current mining inflation of 6.5%. Implats indicated that the deal would translate into employees pocketing average increases of 6.6% over the five-year period. The lowest-paid workers would receive increases of R1 150 in year one and up to R1 500 in the last year of the deal.

- Without going on strike, the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU) advised on 24 July 2022 that blanket workers have settled their 2022 wage negotiations with the new increases ranging from 7% to 9.11%. The two-year deal was signed after three rounds of negotiations and would come into effect on 1 August 2022. According to SACTWU, for the Metro areas an increase of 7% would apply for each of the two years of the agreement while non-metro areas would see an increase of 9.05% for the first year and 9.11% for the second year.

- The Cosatu-affiliated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union has settled its wage dispute in the footwear sector without going on strike. The new collective agreement was successfully concluded under the dispute resolution processes and procedures of the National Bargaining Council of the Leather Industry of South Africa, with employers represented by the Southern African Footwear & Leather Industries Association (SAFLIA). The new wage increase of 6.8%for SACTWU's footwear sector members would be backdated from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. The signature processes for the written wage agreement for this new footwear sector wage settlement were completed on 5 July 2022.

- Anglo American Platinum Limited announced that it had averted a strike and signed a **five-year wage agreement** with three of its four recognised unions representing 90% of unionised employees; namely the AMCU, NUM and UASA Union. The agreement would be implemented from 1 July 2022 after the agreement was reached on the 26 May 2022. The wage agreement increase and salary-related allowances would increase the total labour cost-to-company on average by 6.6% per annum over the five-year period.

- The Public Servants Association (PSA) on 19 August 2022 reached a salary agreement with the State Information Technology Agency (Sita) that would see employees getting an increase of 6% for the 2022/2023 financial year. The PSA initially tabled a salary demand of 12% across the board and a standby allowance of R300. A dispute was declared with the CCMA after the employer's failure to respond to the demand for three months. Conciliation took place on 19 August 2022 when the employer tabled an offer of 6% for all employees within the scope of the bargaining forum. The increase also cover employees earning above the maximum threshold of salary scales. Salary increments for employees outside the bargaining forum would be determined by the Sita board.

- The coal producer Thungela Resources has signed a **three-year wage agreement** with NUM, who represented 86% of unionised employees on 20 September 2022. The agreement was effective from 1 June 2022 to May 2025. The wage agreement increases salary and salary-related allowances and was expected to increase the total labour cost-to-company on average by 6% a year over the three-year period. According to the agreement, officials including mining artisans, would get a 7.5% increase in the first year, then a 7% increase in the following two years. The skilled miners would get a R1 100 increase for the first year, then a R1 000 increase in the next two years.

- The private security sector (Security Association of South Africa and South African National Employer Association) signed a **four-year wage** deal that would see workers earning more than R7 000 a month in the last year of an agreement. In the first year of the deal, which came into effect in March 2023, employees would get a 13% increase. In the second year of the agreement, which was signed at the National Bargaining Council for the Private Security Sector at Midrand on the 13 September 2022, workers would get a 6.5% increase, followed by 7.5% hikes in years three and four. The unions, including the South African National Security and Allied Workers' Forum and the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union, initially demanded a 16% wage increase and then declared a deadlock when the parties could not reach an agreement.

- The Nehawu union in the Western Cape has concluded a wage agreement with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) for the year 2022 with the implementation date 1 January 2022. The parties averted the strike and reached this agreement on the 25 June 2022 with the following as part of the signed agreement with parties:
    - Cost of Living Adjustment Grade Increase
    - Grade 14 – 18: 6.2% salary increase;
    - Grade 9 – 13: 5.5% salary increase;
    - Grade 5 – 8: 4.5% salary increase

- The two parties, NUMSA union and New tyre Manufacturing Employers Association who represent Bridgestone South Africa, Conti Tech Africa, Continental Tyres South Africa, Sumitumo Rubber South Africa and Goodyear South Africa managed to sign a **three-year wage deal** with employers in the tyre manufacturing industry. It accepted a 7.5% increase for the first year and a reduced adjustment of 6% for the two years that would follow. "The agreement was signed on 31 October with effect from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025.

- The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) entered into a **three-year wage agreement** with gold miner DRDGold's surface retreatment entity Ergo Mining, effective from 1 July 2022. Category four to five employees would receive a 9.5% increase and category six to nine employees an 8% increase, while category 10 to 15 employees would receive a 6.5% increase in years one, two and three respectively. The living-out allowance would increase by R150 to R3 150 a month from 1 July 2022 and by a further R150 on 1 July 2023 and 1 July 2024 respectively. A home ownership allowance would also be paid to qualifying employees.

- Avoiding a strike, the Nehawu as a majority union in the Legislative Sector has on 14 January 2022 concluded a 2021/2022 wage increment agreement with the Legislature Employers Organisation, who represents the employer in the eight Provincial Legislatures and National Parliament. This agreement comes after proficient negotiations, which almost saw the collapse of the National Bargaining Forum as the employer in the sector was confident that they were going to implement a 0% salary increment for the members. Parties managed to resolve the impasse and concluded an agreement that in the main would cover the following areas: salaries, medical aid, housing allowance, 13th cheque and car allowance for the financial year 2021/22. This would see employees in the bargaining unit receive a base line salary increment of 1.5% that would be calculated based on total cost to company and back dated to April 2021. Furthermore, employees would receive a once off non-pensionable cash payment of R 22 000 calculated at R 1 833.33 per month for employees that were employed on or before 1st April 2021, with those employees employed after the 1st April 2021 receiving a pro-rata amount of R 1 833.33 per month based on the number of months employed. The agreement was reached on the 19 January 2022.

- Motor Industry Staff Association, Retail Motor Industry Organisation & Fuel Retail Association averted a strike action against NUMSA and signed the agreement on 4 November 2022. The agreement was entailed that, the component manufacturers received 7% in the first year and 6% in the following two years, while fuel retailers agreed to increase salaries of forecourt attendants by 7.5% in the first year and 6% for the remainder of the agreement. It was agreed that the cashier's salaries would be increased by 5% in the first year and 4% for the remainder of the agreement. In other sectors across the board but based on the current wage model, wage and salary increases would be based on the minimum rates of pay with all employees earning in excess of minimum rates, receiving guaranteed monetary increases equal to the value of the increase in the minimum rate of pay for respective and relevant grades of pay, for the following periods: Year 1 = 6.5%; Year 2 and 3 = 5%.

- The Glass Industry Employers Association, Ceppwawu, Giwusa & Sacwu & Solidarity reached an across the agreement on 29 July 2022 after they avoided a strike action. The agreement entailed that in the year 2022, the increase would be 6% across the board on the current actual basic wages. The current minimum monthly wage of R6 930.06 per month would be increased by 6% as from 1 July 2022 until 30 June 2023.

3.2.1. Abandoned strike incidents

- On 12 August 2022, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) welcomed the suspension of another industrial action over wage increments by two recognized labour unions, PSA and Nehawu. The suspension of the industrial action afforded all parties the opportunity to work towards progressing the negotiations and related discussions towards settling the labour dispute.

- National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa members from Jasco Electrical Manufacturers went on strike from 9 March to 6 June 2022 demanding a 6% wage increase while the employer was offering 3%. Members of the union abandoned the strike and return to work without an agreement being reached.

- National Workers Union members embarked on a strike demanding 74% salary increase against the Bidvest Steiner's offer of 5%. No settlement was reached but members resorted to returned to work.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The annual industrial report allows us to map the strikes and lockouts activities in 2022 in South Africa. Although there is slight upward trend on the working days lost to industrial action between 2021 and 2022, the report reflects a number of variation when looking at sectoral and provincial levels. A significant number of working days lost were recorded in the mining industry. The number of working days lost per 1 000 employees have been relatively stable in the trade and agriculture industries from 2021 to 2022, but it intensified in the mining, transport and community industries over the same period. By far, the most affected part of the economy was the mining industry with 4 864 working days lost in 2022, which was almost twenty-nine times as high as in 2021.

The Gauteng province appears to be largely affected compared to other provinces in terms of working days lost. Furthermore, the effects of strike are well associated with the wage lost over time since they had a direct multiplier effect in the community or society in terms of loss of disposable income during the strike duration.

The hike in the number of strike incidents came at an extremely difficult economic time for workers and businesses alike, who are already contending with the high costs of fuel, food and other essentials. Wage increment as a reason why workers went on strikes reflect the call on the cost of financial sustainability and ability to maintain high livelihoods. The wage settlement trend still reflects that the position of workers in the public sector has not fully improved as the wage increases secured have been eroded by inflation over time. Lastly, the findings still show that the collective bargaining was prominent at company level that had cover more than one workplace.

Key points for policy considerations:

- With higher interest rates likely to continue in 2023, meaning higher debt expenses for the average South African, government will have to continue to implement policies and measures to mitigate the hardship being experienced by vulnerable working class.

- Employers should probably consider the real wage that is above the inflation rate since it might give some comfort to what workers can buy with their wages.

- There is a need for a strong collective bargaining function to be able to meet the goals of workers in time.

- Economists recommend that the key to making the seemingly impossible equation of work is to introduce investment into career development and day-to-day working conditions that will have the dual effect of easing financial pressures for both parties as well as ensuring improved future career prospects for employees and a stronger talent for organizations.

Limitations of the strikes data coverage

- ❖ *There are concerns that not all employers and employer organizations who were affected by strike activities voluntarily provided and reported the strike reports to the Department.*
- ❖ *Timely reporting of strike information for recording continues to be a challenge. This affected our data collection system and processing of the strike information for the final report.*

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ANNEXURE A

Profile of work stoppages, 2022

A detailed breakdown of strike activities that occurred and monitored in the Department of Employment and Labour's media monitoring data system in the last twelve months of 2022 is presented below. The strike profiles are presented for a closer look on how the disputes were identified, monitored, captured and submitted by the employer from January to December of 2022.

January 2022

- A strike by Kenilworth Racecourse workers came to an end with an amicable settlement reached on Monday 3 January outside the Southern Suburbs racecourse. The spokesman for Cape Racing confirmed to the Sporting Post that over the past 6 months, there have been ongoing wage negotiation discussions between Cape Racing and the represented union, General Industries Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA). **Source: Sporting Post, 3 January 2022.**

- Giwusa and Fawu workers from Clover continued with the strike action and were determined to see it through until their demands were met, despite not being paid since the beginning of the strike action in November 2022. As part of the rolling mass action against Clover, the striking workers were demonstrating at the CCMA in Johannesburg on Monday 3 January, where Giwusa and Fawu were set to declare a dispute against the company for "withholding the payment of the workers' 13th cheque". **Source: Business report online, 3 January 2022.**

- The two-day strike by employees of Ditsobotla local municipality in North West has ended on Thursday 6 January after the management and unions reached an agreement to implement the once-off payment as per South African Local Government Bargaining Council [SALGBC]. Municipal workers downed tools on Monday, demanding their once-off bonus payment as agreed at the bargaining council. The strike adversely affected the delivery of services in Ditsobotla. **Source: IOL News, 6 January 2022.**

- The public were urged to avoid the roads around UNISA's Florida campus after tyres were set alight at the entrances of the campus as staff stage a protest over salary increases and general working conditions. **Source: Twitter, 17 January 2022.**

- On 17 January the African National Congress staff set for another go-slow as war over unpaid salaries. This came after a resolution taken at a general staff meeting on Friday after the party failed to meet a commitment to pay outstanding salaries by 15 November 2022.The non-payment of salaries is said to have affected staff and their families negatively. **Source: TimesLIVE, 17 January 2022.**

- A large group of frustrated workers from the Steve Tshwete Municipality in Mpumalanga have gathered at the solid waste department on Thursday 20 January over salary level adjustments. **Source: Middelburg Observer 17 January 2022.**

- On 21 January workers at G4S Secure Solutions accused their employer of trying to prevent some of the beneficiaries from getting what is duly theirs in the R20m flowing from their black economic empowerment deal. **Source: Sowetan, 21 January 2022.**

- Hundreds of security guards at Nelson Mandela Bay clinics went on strike on Wednesday, 26 January demanding their salaries for January. The security guards have accused the company of frequently paying their salaries late. **Source: Groundup, 26 January 2022.**

- A group of workers from Fruit & Veg City in Louis Trichardt went picketing in front of the shop in Grobbler Street on Friday, 28 January with a list of demands. The workers' demands included negotiations around their working hours and leave days, incentive bonuses, UIF and annual salary adjustments. Dressed in their work uniforms, the chanting workers insisted they get paid their annual incentive bonuses, which they said had always been paid to them in previous years without fail. **Source: Limpopo Mirror, 28 January 2022.**

February 2022

- The National Association of South African Workers staged a picket outside Bidvest's Kempton Park offices on Wednesday 2 February. The union accused the company of negotiating wage increases in bad faith and said that it was offering no direct benefits to workers. **Source: eNCA 3 February 2022.**

- On 9 February, a group of over 500 University of Pretoria's (UP) insourced security personnel and food services staff went on strike to plead with the institution for adequate working conditions, fair and equal remuneration of workers according to the country's labour laws. **Source: Pretoria News 9 February 2022.**

- Dozens of DSW workers protested outside the eThekwini Municipality's Solid Waste Unit (DSW) unit have embarked on an illegal strike. Reason for the strike **Source: Mercury News, 14 February 2022.**

- Mangaung Metro workers downed tools on 22 February following a brief meeting with the South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) outside the Bloemfontein City Hall in the Free State. This followed after workers had raised concerns over a guaranteed salaries pay date. **Source: OFM News, 24 February 2022**.

March 2022

- Workers at Amatola Water, in the Eastern Cape, downed tools on 2 March saying the management of the bulk water supplier was failing to address their complaints. **Source: Sabc News, 4 March 2022.**

- Gauteng's rapid rail service was operating while its bus link service has been suspended due to protest action by drivers on 8 March. National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) national motor organiser Mduduzi Nkosi told Eyewitness News the protest action stemmed from an internal conflict. **Source: TimesLIVE,8 March 2022**.

- On 9 March, over 300 workers at an engineering company in Pinetown, west of Durban, downed tools over wage-related issues. **Source: East Coast Radio, 9 March 2022.**

- Early on 10 March, the municipal security guards from the Alfred Duma Local Municipality in Ladysmith locked municipal gates preventing access to several departments including Public Safety and Emergency Services. The root cause of the wildcat strike was the fact that contracts of municipal security guards were terminated by the municipality as per their contractual agreement between the employer and the individual employees. **Source: IOL News, 10 March 2022.**

- On 10 March health workers from Chris Hani Baragwanath hospital picketed over the scrapping of more than 800 posts and non-payment of suppliers. Health workers were demanding that more than 800 posts created during the COVID-19 pandemic be retained however the Gauteng health department indicated that there is not enough money to keep all the posts. **Source: Groundup, 10 March 2022.**

- South Africa's Sibanye-Stillwater has stopped operations at its gold mines after two major unions began a strike over wages on Thursday 10 March. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) and United Association of South Africa (UASA) all voted for a strike while the Solidarity union which was part of the labour coalition during wage negotiations broke ranks and accepted Sibanye's pay offer. After NUM and AMCU the country's two biggest mineworker unions served Sibanye with a strike notice in the week, the company proceeded to issue a lock-out notice to bar all workers from accessing the work place. The unions which voted in favour of a strike were demanding a pay increase of R1 000 rand per month over the next three years. **Source: Reuters, 10 March 2022.**

- A small group of National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa) members gathered at the Comair offices in Kempton Park on 15 March demanding that the CEO resigns after the SA Civil Aviation Authority suspended Comair's air certificate due to safety issues on flights. **Source: TimesLIVE, 15 March 2022.**

- On 16 March the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) has shut down the University of South Africa (Unisa) over a wage dispute that has since led to a full-blown strike at the university. A graduation ceremony and future planned ceremonies scheduled for the week had to be postponed. **Source: Sabc News, 16 March 2022.**

- The City of Tshwane workers in Cantonments Road Centurion caused a mayhem by protesting against the city management on 16 March. The strike came after the city decided not to implement salary hikes in terms of the agreement with unions and the South African Local Government Association. **Source: Pretoria News, 16 March 2022.**

- Underground mine workers at the Phalaborwa Mining Company have vowed to continue with their strike until management addresses their demands. The workers who started their strike on Wednesday 16 March were demanding the payment of dividends from their shares from the mine. It is alleged workers gained 10 % of the shares in 2013, but they said they did not receive. **Source: Sabc News, 19 March 2022.**

- A group of workers at Checkers supermarket in Pretoria North were facing suspension after they accused their branch manager over racism on Saturday 26 March. It is alleged the branch manager was calling them "baboons and stupid blacks". Racial tension reached boiling point when the company called in private security guards to prevent workers from entering the store. Workers said the protest against racism. **Source: IOL News, 29 March 2022.**

April 2022

- Angry patients shouted at striking health workers at Laetitia Bam Day Hospital in Kariega in the Eastern Cape. Health workers were protesting for more community health workers and why contracts of the 8 000 Covid contract work had to end. **Source: Groundup, 4 April 2022.**

- The entrance to the Thelle Mogoerane Hospital in Vosloorus were shut from early Wednesday morning. Patients at two Gauteng hospitals were turned away due to staff protests over the non-renewal of their Covid-19 temporary contracts, staff shortage and working equipment. Due to the strike no one was allowed to go in and out of the hospital meanwhile patients were being turned away. **Source: SowetanLive, 6**

April 2022.

- On Monday 4 April, close to 100 staff at Taylor Blinds and Shutters in Cape Town went on strike for better wages. The strike for higher wages was led by the Independent Commercial Hospitality and Allied Workers Union (ICHAWU) where workers were demanding an increase of R250 a week whiles the company was offering 6 % wage increase. **Source: Groundup, 8 April 2022.**

- Animals in game reserves managed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) were at risk of going hungry as more staff members joined the picket for salary increases. **Source: DispatchLive, 14 April 2022.**

- Health workers in several provinces of South Africa have engaged in protests and strikes since late March reacting to missed payments, announced losses of working places and rearrangements of services that significantly alter access to care. While workers' grievances differed between provinces, they all pointed towards the discrepancies between the workers' demands and what is likely to be the government's path towards post-pandemic recovery, better staffing and working conditions as opposed to a new round of austerity measures. **Source DispatchLive, 15 April 2022.**

- The South African Municipal Workers Union in Limpopo's Lepelle Water marched and submitted a memorandum of demands to its offices in Polokwane on 22 April. Workers cited issues of safety, the board's alleged failure in its fiduciary duties, implementation of collective agreements, unilateral change of conditions of service and insourcing of services. The union said without consultation, the board aslo increased the worker's salary by 3 % instead of the agreed 6.5 % wage increase. **Source: Capricorn FM, 23 April 2022.**

- Tension were high in the Kirkwood area of the Eastern Cape where farmworkers went on strike on 25 April. Residents of the town also joined the striking workers to deliver a memorandum to representatives of the local municipality, police and farm owners. The farmworkers were demanding a wage increase from R23 per hour to R30 per hour while residents were also demanding action against crime in the area. **Source: Sabc News, 25 April 2022.**

- Emergency services workers in parts of the Buffalo City Metro and Amathole District Municipality in the Eastern Cape have downed tools over grievances including poor working conditions and staff shortages. The principle of no-work no pay was said to be implemented on workers who participated in the unprotected strike. **Source: Sabc News, 25 April 2022.**

- Security guards who work in Cape Town's city centre marched to the Civic Centre and the offices of the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) on Friday 22 March following the suspension of about 200 security guards by Phangela Group security firm. Workers were unhappy with their new job specifications and pay cuts when the company took over on 1 March. **Source: Groundup, 26 April 2022.**

- The South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) strike over other compensation/wages by the Mogale City Local Municipality employees impacted on the waste collection schedule, the Licensing Centre services, sanitation services and street-cleaning routes, as well as other frontline services and council venues. **Source: Krugersdorp News, 28 April 2022.**

- Workers from the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria have picketed outside the institution's main campus in Pretoria expressing their unhappiness with what they described as "unsatisfactory management style" of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor. The workers have vowed to continue with the strike action until their demands were heard. **Source: Pretoria News 28 April 2022.**

May 2022

- Workers at the famous Thaba Moshate Hotel and Casino in Burgersfort, Limpopo went on strike on 2 May over wage increment. The workers who are members the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union were demanding a 7% wage increase from the employer. **Source SabcNews, 2 May 2022.**

- Some of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union members led a strike in front of the Estralita Special School in Lydenburg on Thursday 5 May. It is alleged the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) disrupted the Special School by locking learners and some employees inside the school premises. According to social media posts, there were allegations of racism at the school. **Source: Lowvelder News, 5 May 2022.**

- South Africa's largest metal-workers' union began a strike at ArcelorMittal South Africa Ltd on Wednesday 11 May after wage negotiations broke down with the employer. The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) had given notice of the strike on 9 May with the hope that the action could be averted. **Source: Business Day 11 May 2022.**

- Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed York Timber employees affiliated with the Numsa embarked on a strike at York's Escarpment operations on 25 April. The strike notice contained only one matter of mutual interest relating to job grading. It is alleged an independent senior commissioner of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration was engaged to oversee the job grading process. Meanwhile the process was in an advanced stage, Numsa exited the process and issued a strike notice. **Source: Engineering News ,13 May 2022.**

- KwaDukuza Municipality in Durban has reported that services in its area were disrupted on 16 May due to a strike by staff members over unpleasant working conditions. Amongst others, the disruption affected staff in the electricity and water unit, administration and the finance unit. **Source: IOL News, 16 May 2022.**

- SACCAWU members at the Khoroni Hotel Casino and Convention Resort in Thohoyandou went on a protected industrial action from 15 May demanding an 8% wage increase. It is alleged those workers, like all other workers in the country continued to be at the receiving end of wages that are under pressure due to the ever-increasing electricity tariffs, high fuel, transport and food prices**. Source**: **Cosatu News 20 May 2022.**

- Patients at the Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital in the Northern Cape were reportedly left starving since 23 May due to a strike action by staff working at the kitchen. The strike started over a misunderstanding regarding employee bonuses. The workers said that according to their contracts, they should get 60% bonuses however the employer reported that the 60% will depends on the company growth. **Source: OFM News 24 May 2022.**

- On Tuesday 24 May 2022, it was reported that residents of Tswelelang Township near Wolmaransstad in the North West, were affected by a municipal workers strike that has been ongoing for almost a month. Other locations such as Lebaleng in Makwasi and Kgakala near Leeudoringstaad, which also fall under the municipality were also said to be affected. Sewage spillages were reportedly overflowing into people's yards while refuse was also not collected and water shortage continued. The main reason for the strike was over job evaluation demands. S**ource: OFM News, 24 May 2022.**

- Hundreds of South African Revenue Services (SARS) workers picketed outside offices on Wednesday 25 May to mark the start of their nationwide strike for higher wages among other benefits. The workers affiliated to Nehawu and PSA were demanding an across the board wage increase of 7%, ten more days of annual leave specifically for COVID-19, medical aid, a housing allowance for all employees and a R2 000 "token of appreciation" payment to staff over 60 years of age. This comes as negotiations which started in January between union representatives and SARS deadlocked. According to Nehawu and PSA, SARS has since offered a 1.4% increase while workers demanded a 7% increase. **Source: Sowetan News, 25 May 2022.**

- Staff members at the Kimberley's CBC school have been participating in a legal strike from Monday

23 March demanding better salaries and an end to discrimination. Participants to the strike included teachers, assistant teachers, cleaners, aftercare workers and maintenance workers. According to staff members they have been asking for a salary increase for several years, however the school continued to tell them that there was no money. Workers complained that some of them have been working at CBC for over 30 years but still earn below R10 000. **Source: DFA 27 May 2022.**

June 2022

- The Africa Steel and Tube (AST) workers protested against the company over salary increases and ill-treatment at 15 Dan Jacobs Street, Alrode, in the Alberton area on 7 June. The workers demanded safe, fair and equal treatment of workers as well as reasonable salary increases. Accordingly, the protest began on 3 June after the employer's alleged failure to meet and negotiate salary increase demands with workers. **Source: Youtube,7 June 2022.**

- The employees of Metsi-a-Lekoa have warned the Emfuleni Local Municipality (ELM) Mayor and his Municipal Manager (MM) to stop playing tricks and start paying workers what is due to them. This is after the Shop Stewards joined the workers to march to the ELM's Head Offices in Vanderbijlpark on Monday,6 June to demand their backdated salaries. According to a Bargaining Council agreement in 2017, the ELM was supposed to pay workers at least half of their back dated salaries. **Source: Sedibeng Ster,9 June 2022.**

- Municipal workers from the Steve Tshwete Municipality downed tools on 10 June over the "no-work, no-pay" policy. The strike came after workers downed tools to demand that charges layed against some employees be withdrawn. **Source: Middelburg Observer, 15 June 2022.**

- National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa members employed by three contractors Newrak, Reagetswe Mining Group and Triple M Mining embarked on an indefinite strike at its Rustenburg mines on 20 June. They have reportedly been provoked into taking this drastic action because they were enough with being abused by the labour brokers who exploit them by paying them very little and denying them benefits while they reap massive profits. **Source: Mining Weekly 20 June 2022.**

- Tension went rising at Eskom with the struggling South African electricity supplier confirming protests at a number of power plants following a breakdown in wage negotiations. Groups at Eskom's six coal-fired stations blocked roads leading to some of the power stations and hampered the movement of people and goods into or outside of the facilities**. Source: Bloomberg, 23 June 2022.**

- NUMSA members picketed outside the Embassy of Japan in Pretoria over the future of the Nissan plant in South Africa on 24 June 2022. Nissan workers feared being displaced as the plant introduces new technology. Dressed in Nissan overalls, they waved flags and placards while chanting as they waited for a representative from the embassy. **Source: Pretoria News 24 June 2022.**

July 2022

- About 3 000 nurses from the Eastern Cape's rural hospitals and clinics gathered at the provincial health department's Quigney office in East London on Wednesday to protest over their unpaid rural allowances. **Source: DispatchLive, 15 June 2022.**

- Middelburg residents have been advised to avoid the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality's civic centre as employees have downed tools on 15 July. It is alleged that employees were dissatisfied with the end result of the municipal grading process as well as the suspension of certain strike instigators. **Source: Middelburg Observer, 15 July 2022.**

- On 20 July, health care worker unions and their members in Gauteng took to the streets to march against the state of affairs that state employees in the sector experienced. The march took place in the Braamfontein area in central Johannesburg. Among those involved in the strike action were the Democratic Nursing

Organisation of South Africa (Denosa) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). Other issues that Denosa raised were lack of staff capacity at hospitals, the non-payment of post-community service nurses and the current cohort of community service nurses. **Source: ILO, 20 July 2022**.

- Cosatu slammed Eskort for dismissing 1 500 workers after they participated on a wage demand strike. This came after Eskort made a final offer of a 6% wage increase whereas workers demanded a 15% salary increase. Wage negotiations between workers and the company included among others, demands for a 15% salary increase, the conversion of casual workers into permanent employees, housing allowance, medical aid and equal salary for work of equal value. **Source: News24, 21 July 2022.**

August 2022

- The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), one of the biggest unions in the mining industry, embarked on an indefinite wage strike at Geomechanics after the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration issued it with a certificate of non-resolution after wage talks deadlocked. **Source: BusinessLive,1 August 2022.**
- A group of Akacia Medical workers downed tools on Wednesday 3 August over "unsatisfactory" salary increase by the surgical equipment manufacturing firm. It was reported that the employees picketed outside the company's premises in Harrower Road from around 7am demanding that management increase its offer of R380.**Source: HeraldLive,3 August 2022.**

- Private entities cleaned up the Mbombela CBD after municipal workers dumped refuse in the streets. We Care 4 Nelspruit and the Ndlovu Group ensured that Mbombela welcomed visitors who were attending the South Africa vs New Zealand soccer game on Saturday 6 August to a clean town after municipal employees had embarked on an illegal protest barricading some of the CBD streets with refuse. **Source: Middelburg Observer, 5 August 2022.**

- The eThekwini Municipality has asked residents and businesses to keep refuse bags and bins inside their properties after Cleansing and Solid Waste Department employees went on an illegal strike on Monday, 16 August 2022. In a statement, eThekwini said the work stoppage was due to the overtime cut that was implemented on 1 August 2022. The interruption affected the waste collection and street-sweeping services. Workers from the department embarked on a go-slow at the beginning of the month when the overtime cuts were announced but returned to work after negotiations between the unions and the municipality. **Source: Zululand Observer, 16 August 2022.**

- The Chinese consumer electronics company Hisense South Africa in Atlantis seized operations after an organised strike turned violent. It is alleged that protests were held by permanent workers who were up-in-arms over being placed on short time without five days' notice and that some workers have not been paid a full salary since January 2022.**Source: Twitter, 18 August 2022.**

- Tshwane's workers affiliated to South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMU) went on a protest demanding the mayor to honour the collective agreement signed at the bargaining council for pay increase backdating to 2021. **Source: Pretoria News 18 August, 2022.**

- The Eastern Cape Department of Health found itself in a crisis on Monday 24 August when three dead bodies were deserted following a wildcat strike by Forensic Pathology Services workers over unpaid overtime. Workers from the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality and the Amathole, OR Tambo and Alfred Nzo municipalities downed tools to demand immediate payment for their overtime, which amounts to over 30% of their salaries **Source: DispatchLive, 24 August 2022.**

- The South African Industrial Commercial and Allied Workers Union's 500 workers embarked on a wage strike at Pieman's on Thursday 25 August. The union declared a dispute after the employer RCL Foods, demonstrated that they are not willing to negotiate wages, which is R30 hourly rate from the genuine demand of R50 per hour on top of the current rate, benefits and working conditions of the workers in good faith. **Source: Fin24, 25 August 2022.**

September 2022

- Travel operations were disrupted after workers at the Public Utility Transport Corporation (Putco) began a planned strike on Thursday 1 September 2022. Workers downed tools demanding a 6 % wage increase and bonuses. The strike by its workers left customers stranded in Roseville, Pretoria and Dobsonville. The transport company has reported that they applied for exemption not to pay the 6 % salary increase and bonuses for that year due to the impact of Covid-19 that has had an adverse impact on the finances of the company. The exemption application was done in order to save jobs and ensure sustainability of the company. **Source: Eye Witness News, 2 September 2022.**

- EThekwini Municipal workers brought the City Hall to a standstill when they downed tools, disrupted traffic and demanded that deputy mayor allow them to work for overtime. **Source: IOL, 4 September 2022.**

- Service delivery crisis loomed as eThekwini's Water and Sanitation Unit employees embarked on strike over overtime pay and other labour related issues. It is alleged, the Water and Sanitation Unit was the third municipal department to down tools since August after the city implemented a new overtime policy that imposed drastic cuts on the overtime pay that workers can claim. **Source: IOL News, 16 September 2022.**

- Hundreds of workers affiliated to the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (NUPSAW) protested at the Gauteng health department on Friday 16 September over "permanent absorption". Workers alleged that they were taken for granted and that the work they do has doubled and that they carry most of the workload especially at a community level without complaining. The union was demanding that its members employed under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) among others, be employed permanently by the health department. It is alleged that some of the workers has worked as cleaners for the department for more than seven years with earnings of R3 200 a month which is not enough to support their families. **Source: Groundup, 19 September 2022.**

- Workers at the Mogalakwena local municipality in Limpopo downed tools on Tuesday morning, 20 September demanding for the council to honour the recent high court judgment, which declared that the appointment of municipal manager was unlawful. The spontaneous picket took place hours before a council meeting, which was set to take place to discuss among other matters, the high court judgment against the manager's appointment. **Source: Sowetan, 20 September 2022.**

October 2022

- The "illegal protest" by Msunduzi Municipality in Pietermatzburg waste department employees has left a large part of the CBD without water. The employees started with the protest on 6 October leading to the disruption of waste removal in various parts of the city. The water department was also affected leaving businesses, government departments and residents in distress. **Source: The Citizen, 6 October 2022.**

- On 6 October, workers at South Africa's logistics group Transnet launched an industrial strike over a wage dispute that paralysed services and disrupted exports services. Transnet, which was already operating below capacity failed to come to a wage agreement with the United National Transport Union (Untu) and the South African Transport Allied Workers Union (Satawu), who was demanding an increase of 12% and 13.5% respectively**. Source: Splash 247 News, 6 October 2022.**

- Makro stores workers have embarked on a salary wage strike in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape, on 27 October. The union Saccawu, reportedly said that it has been in four conciliation sessions with the CCMA however they were unable to reach an agreement. It was reported that workers were demanding a 12% wage increase and an R8 000 minimum wages meanwhile Makro was offering them 4.5% wage increase. The union have rejected the wage offer saying that the offer was not in line with inflation. **Source: News24, 27 October 2022.**

November 2022

- Strike action commenced at PMG mine in Postmasburg where workers were demanding a 10 % wage increase along with a R1 000 monthly increase for cleaners, belt attendants and laboratory workers against the employer's offer of 5.5%. The striking workers were also demanding a R1 800 housing allowance and a R250 shift allowance. Workers indicated that 39 employees were served with dismissal letters on Tuesday, 1 November for participating in the strike. **Source: DFA, 1 November 2022.**

- Workers from Mhlathuze Water engaged in a wildcat strike action where police had to be called in to restore order. According to the workers, the bone of contention related to salary increments, housing and overtime allowances dating back to the time of their suspended chief executive. Under pressure, Mhlathuze Water had to issue an impromptu note to its clients which include the City of Mhlathuze (Mpangeni-Richards Bay) and big factories to allay fears of water cuts. **Source: IOL News, 2 November 2022.**

- Members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) within the Mpumalanga tourism sector downed tools, preventing tourists from accessing a total of 21 nature reserves in the province. The workers are employed by the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, responsible for tourism products and facilities that belong to the provincial government. The agency spokesperson confirmed the impasse was over salary increments, similar to industrial action taken in 2019. **Source: Daily Tourism update,9 November 2022.**

- Thousands of civil servants associated with Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) across the country took to the streets on 10 November calling for a wage hike. Workers in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga were among those who took to the streets on Thursday morning. The PSA and health professional union Hospersa amongst a 10% increase across the board despite the government's decision to unilaterally implement a 3% wage increase. Disgruntled workers also wanted the government to honour the 2018 wage agreement after failing to implement increases in the final year of the deal. **Source: EWN, 11 November 2022.**

- The protest that Samwu-affiliated employees embarked on caused major traffic delays on the M1 highway in Johannesburg on 10 November 2022. Disgruntled Samwu members brought peak-time traffic to a standstill on the M1 highway in Newtown. At the heart of the protest was an issue of an agreement related to pay disparities and the rights of employees. It is understood that the workers were not pleased with the delays in a meeting scheduled with management to discuss their concerns. The workers instead took their frustrations to the highway causing a traffic backlog on one of Johannesburg's busiest routes. **Source: Eyewitness, 11 November 2022.**

- Over 100 security staff and cleaners working for companies contracted to the City of Ekurhuleni protested outside the Germiston Municipal offices on Wednesday 16 November 2022. The protesters said they represented 3 000 workers who have not been paid for months, or routinely paid late and some have been retrenched for over six months but never paid out. They work at various municipal sites across Ekurhuleni – including Germiston, Benoni, Daveyton, Heidelberg and Boksburg working for companies such as Ngodvongodvo Security company, Khayalami Security, Zabalaza Security, Kenna Malobisi Security, Ntamo Technologies and Falaz Cleaning Company. Mayoral Committee Member for Finance Fanyana Nkosi addressed the workers and promised to resolve the issue with the companies. **Source: Groundup, 17 November 2022.**

- A number of nurses affiliated with trade union Denosa protested outside Kalafong Academic Hospital in Pretoria on 30 November. The nurses were calling for the resignation of the hospital's CEO who was allegedly accused of maladministration and corruption. **Source: Eyewitness, 20 November 2022.**

- The General Industries Workers' Union of South Africa announced a strike at RCL Foods' Sunbake operations in Polokwane starting on Monday 21 November 2022. The union's wage demands at Sunbake include a R600 increase across the board, the scrapping of a sales commission in favour of overtime and a medical aid scheme with 50% of contributions by the employer. **Source: News24, 21 November 2022.**

- Post Office workers belonging to the Communication Workers Union (CWU) marched to Parliament on Thursday 24 November to address issues facing the ailing state-owned enterprise. Their list of demands included the resignation of Post Office CEO, the halting of all salary cuts, a 15% salary increase as well as the payment of all medical aid and pension fund contributions of members. **Source: EWN, 24 November 2022.**

- Dozens of workers started with the protest outside the municipal building in Vereeniging on Monday 28 November 2022. The community healthcare workers of the Sedibeng district municipality went on protesting outside the building due to non-payment of their salaries. **Source: Sowetan, 30 November 2022.**

December 2022

- About 80 Shoprite truck drivers protested outside its distribution centre in Brackenfell, Cape Town on Thursday 8 December 2022. The workers affiliated with Shosholoza Workers Union of South Africa (SHOWUSA), demanding the company to provide all drivers with a fixed basic salary and transport allowance. **Source: Groundup, 8 December 2022**.

- Makro employees affiliated with the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) downed tools at Makro stores nationwide on Thursday 15 December over wage increases. The strike came after the trade union reached a stalemate in negotiations with their employer at the CCMA. The union Saccawu was demanding a 12% wage increase across the board or R900, a minimum wage hike to R8 000 per month; an increase in sales commissions from 10% to 20%; an increase in monthly working hours from 160 to 195 hours and a R100 uniform allowance. The union also wanted a 13th cheque in December for all employees. **Source: Jacaranda FM, 15 December 2022.**

- Rea Vaya bus services in Johannesburg was on Friday 16 December 2022 suspended due to a labour dispute. The interruption of the services was due to an arising labour issue experienced at one of the bus operating companies. This has led to work stoppage and an obstruction of all services. Commuters were advised to use alternative public transport in the interim. **Source: TimesLIVE, 16 December 2022.**

- Embattled chicken producer Daybreak Farms hit a stumbling block as workers downed tools over salary increase on 20 December. Employees affiliated with the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) were demanding a 33.3% wage increase as the company was offering them 7%. One of the employees involved in organizing the strike, who spoke on condition of anonymity, reported that while this looked like an unreasonable demand in percentage terms, they are asking for R2 000 a month to top up their current salaries of R6 000. Meanwhile, the company was only offering a R420 increase for two years. **Source: News24, 21 December 2022.**

Data Appendix

The following supplementary tables contain data not included in the main report:

Table B.1: Distribution of work stoppages and wages lost by province[16], of 2018 - 2022

Province	Work stoppages					Wages lost Total (R)			Wages lost Total (R)	
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Gauteng	71	79	43	60	50	82 986 516	373 680 759	116 092 102	86 378 633	913 467 431
Western Cape	26	22	21	18	9	97 417 159	15 719 424	1 753 120	30 116 880	5 130 914
Mpumalanga	19	16	12	5	6	6 611 293	1 294 752	18 704 728	1 479 685	34 112 379
KwaZulu-Natal	55	19	18	27	12	33 579 171	7 377 225	5 220 958	19 985 044	18 630 070
Eastern Cape	29	16	37	15	20	25 274 312	29 571 188	6 160 952	28 121 057	2 668 569
Limpopo	15	16	4	1	7	5 638 235	17 883 972	7 428 996	350 000	285 301 737
North West	6	6	8	5	8	14 332 428	1 226 259	11 882 878	36 969 646	23 862 699
Northern Cape	6	5	6	2	1	419 987	669 999	440	13 334 146	732 092
Free State	4	3	4	2	0	638 960	130 475	1 832 404	1 744 561	0
Total	**231**	**182**	**153**	**135**	**113**	**266 898 061**	**447 554 053**	**169 076 578**	**218 479 652**	**1 283 905 891**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database

16 The total number of work stoppages differs from the total of strikes at the national level. This is due to national work stoppages that may affect a number of branches or establishments in the nine provinces, being counted as one in the national but according to workplaces affected in several provinces being counted more than once.

Table B.2: Distribution of employees involved by industry, of 2018 - 2022

Industry (SIC)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Agriculture	3 646	4 763	1 576	1 386	4 186
Mining	2 499	14 092	8 587	43 513	73 040
Manufacturing	19 761	7 738	17 542	28 164	11 579
Utilities	6 012	412	0	0	2 763
Construction	5 193	2 483	452	0	0
Trade	45 118	4 914	461	4 565	12 057
Transport	19 550	6 577	2 234	879	24 063
Finance	365	0	235	166	3 919
Community	35 568	102 596	70 625	11 626	21 920
Total	**137 712**	**143 575**	**101 712**	**90 299**	**153 527**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2018-2022

Table B.4: Distribution of working days by cause of working conditions by industry, 2022

Industry	Disciplinary	Grievances	Other Compensation	Other Reasons	Refusal	Retrenchment / Dismissals	Secondary strike	Socio-Economic	Trade Union	Wages	Working	Total
Agriculture	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**2**
Mining	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	**7**
Manufacturing	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	10	0	**15**
Utilities	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	**3**
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Trade	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	**7**
Transport	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	**7**
Finance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**1**
Community	1	5	9	6	0	0	1	1		11	11	**45**
Total	**1**	**8**	**15**	**10**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**35**	**12**	**87**

Source: Department of Employment and Labour, Strikes Statistics database, 2022

Table C.1: Number of workers involved, working days lost and working hours lost by industry/sector, 2022

Industry/Sector	Workers involved	Working days lost	Working hours lost
Finance	**3 919**	**207 707**	**1 869 363**
Financial intermediation, except insurance and pension funding	3 919	207 707	1 869 363
Trade	**12 057**	**89 765**	**740 968**
Other business activities	500	24 000	192 000
Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motor cycles; repair of personal household goods	10 297	33 508	268 064
Wholesale trade in agricultural raw & materials & livestock	163	8 745	78 360
Wholesale trade in food, beverages & tobacco	1 097	23 512	202 544
Manufacturing	**11 579**	**303 930**	**2 903 282**
Basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery and equipment	4 684	74 211	870 957
Manufacture of coke, refined petroleum products and nuclear fuel	69	69	552
Manufacture of electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c.	160	10 240	92 160
Food products, beverages and tobacco products	2 576	128 045	1 140 670
Manufacture of furniture; manufacturing n.e.c. ; recycling	280	280	2 590
Manufacture of radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus and of medical	866	16 454	131 632
Textiles, clothing and leather goods	256	991	8 401
Transport equipment	1 288	6 440	51 520
Manufacture of wood and products of wood and cork	1 400	67 200	604 800
Community, social and personal services	**21 920**	**273 681**	**1 996 685**
Activities of membership organisations n.e.c.	312	15 912	127 296
Education	6 401	90 692	466 816
Financial intermediation, except insurance and pension funding	11	11	88
Health and social work	4 304	20 862	216 448
Hotels and restaurants	435	6 417	53 850
Local Authority	6 059	67 772	542 000
Other business activities	14	28	224
Other community, social and personal services activities	100	100	1 200
Public administration and defence activities	1 667	65 013	520 104
Recreation, cultural and sporting activities	1 275	3 530	28 531
Security Services	1 342	3 344	40 128
Utilities	**2 763**	**32 979**	**377 504**
Collection, purification and distribution of water	577	4 561	36 488
Electricity, gas, stem and hot water supply	2 186	28 418	341 016
Mining and quarrying	**73 040**	**2 120 713**	**17 667 327**
Mining of gold and uranium ore	25 123	1 909 348	16 229 458
Metal ores, except gold and uranium	47 713	207 285	1 401 149
Other mining and quarrying	204	4 080	36 720

Transport, storage and communication	**24 063**	**274 230**	**2 184 137**
Air transport	30	30	270
Other services activities	21 250	255 000	2 040 000
Passenger transport	754	3 229	25 698
Post and telecommunications	527	951	8 073
Public Transport	1 502	15 020	110 096
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	**4 186**	**40 632**	**336 888**
Agriculture, hunting and related services	986	11 832	106 488
Wholesale trade in agricultural raw & materials & livestock	3 200	28 800	230 400

Table C.2: Number of working days lost by nature of Organization, 2021-2022

	2021	2022
Central Government General	0	65 013
Government Enterprise	26 962	239 907
Local Government General	53 053	67 088
Provincial Government General	2 668	20 068
Private Sector	**614 163**	**2 951 561**
Total	**696 846**	**3 343 637**

Technical notes:

D1. Methodology for monitoring industrial action by DEL

The collection and analysis of industrial action statistics is guided by the guidelines and practices that have been developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The point of departure can be found in the ILO Resolution adopted by the Fourteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in January 1993, concerning statistics of strikes, lockouts and other action due to labour disputes. This resolution is accommodative rather than prescriptive in its approach. It states that; "Each country should aim at developing a comprehensive programme of statistics of strikes, lockouts and where relevant other action due to labour disputes in order to provide an adequate statistical base for the various users, taking into account the specific national needs and circumstances" (ILO Bulletin of Labour Statistics, 1993-2, Annex I, XI). The Department has been provided with a legislated instrument (LRA 9.2 Form) to collect data on labour disputes. The Labour Relations Act 66 Of 1995 section 205 (3) states that (a) An employer must keep a record of the prescribed details of any strike, lock-out or protest action involving its employees, (b) An employer must submit those records in the prescribed manner to the registrar.

D2. Definitions

Section 213 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 provides the following definitions:

***A strike*:**

The partial or complete concerted refusal to work, or the retardation or obstruction of work, by persons who are or have been employed by the same employer or by different employers, for the purpose of remedying a grievance or resolving a dispute in respect of any matter of mutual interest between employer and worker, and every reference to work in this definition includes overtime work, whether it is voluntary or compulsory (s 213).

A lockout:

The exclusion by an employer of workers from the employer's workplace, for the purpose of compelling the workers to accept a demand in respect of any matter of mutual interest between employer and worker, whether or not the employer breaches those workers' contracts of employment in the course of or for the purpose of that exclusion.

A protest action:

The partial or complete concerted refusal to work, or the retardation or obstruction of work, for the purpose of promoting or defending the socio-economic interests of workers, but not for a purpose referred to in the definition of strike".
Barker, F et al (1996) in "South African Labour Glossary" defined the following concepts as follows:

Picketing:

Action by employees or other persons to publicize the existence of a labour dispute by patrolling or standing outside or near the location where the dispute is taking place, usually with placards indicating the nature of the dispute. The aim of picketing might simply be to communicate the grievance to the public or it might be to persuade other employees in that workplace not to work and to take their side in the dispute, to deter scab labour, to persuade or pressurize customers not to enter the workplace, to disrupt deliveries or drum up public support.

A secondary strike:

This refers to a strike in support of a strike by other employees against their employer. The strikers have no issue with their employer, but that employer might be in a strong position (due to there being a close business relationship as either an important customer or supplier) to pressurize the employer who is in dispute.

Stay away action:

This is an industrial action by a group of employees in the form of absenting themselves from work without permission in support of some socio-political or socio-economic issue, which does not relate to their employment situation.

Work stoppage:

A work stoppage is made up of a series of events, all relating to the same issue. Work stoppages have two characteristics, type and degree. The type of action is either a strike (action initiated by an employee), or a lockout (action initiated by an employer). The statutory definitions of strikes and lockouts are given in the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

Industrial action:

This is an action by unions, employees to pressurize the other party in the furtherance of an industrial dispute. It usually refers to strikes and lockouts but could also include picketing, product boycotts, sit-ins, go-slow strikes and other actions, which disrupt the production process.

Establishment involved:

An establishment involved is one in which one or more groups of employees are directly involved in action due to a labour dispute, or in which such actions is effected by the employer.

Work hours:

It refers to those hours during which an employee is obliged to work.

D3. Coverage

Data collection attempts to cover the entire country, all economic activity and all sectors of the economy, legal and illegal industrial action. The system attempts to cover all industrial action due to labour disputes. The figures in this report are inclusive of all industrial actions, which come to the knowledge of the Department, and the methods taken to secure information practically preclude probability of omissions of a serious nature. **This is a painstaking exercise, and it is believed that the statistics indicates the conditions of labour disputes in the country with "reasonable accuracy".** Since LRA 9.2 Form has been redesigned, the Department is now in a position to cover employees both directly and indirectly involved in industrial actions separately, that is, those who participate directly or indirectly by stopping work. Workers absent from their normal place of work at the time of a strike or stoppage, for reasons such as sick leave, vacation, business or personal reasons, whether authorized or unauthorized, are excluded from participation in industrial actions and are therefore not counted.

The LRA excludes independent contractors from the definition of employee. The LRA further excludes from the scope of coverage certain categories of workers, namely members of the National Defense Force, National Intelligence Agency and South African Secret Service. The coverage by the Department of industrial action, however, includes all of the above, provided they embarked on an industrial action in the period under consideration.

D4. Strike Data collection

In addition to the legal obligation on employers to report industrial action, the Department has introduced an active media-monitoring programme that is enforcing the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 section 205 subsection (3) subparagraph (a) and (b) on employers to submit the strike information in the prescribed manner to the registrar. Through this system, media information on industrial action is used as a source of information to make contact with employers and to encourage compliance with reporting strike incidents. Telephone, emails, SMS, WhatsApp, and telefax tools were used as means of communication with the affected employers to ensure "a reasonably, accurate and large coverage" of all labour disputes in the country.

The cooperation that exists with the private sector employers had also speed up the process of strike data collection. After completing the LRA 9.2 form, most employers send it to the Head Office of the Department of Labour. Some employers will probably keep a blank form with them, which will proactively be completed when a strike arises in the company and they voluntarily forward it to the department in time.

After receiving the form either directly from the employer or from the provincial office, Head Office staff members will check and assess if the information provided is sufficient and correct. In case it is not, the Department of Labour staff within the LMIS unit will contact employers with the aim of getting missing information. From this process, the strike information iscaptured into a database specifically designed for monitoring industrial action in the country. The information includes workers who were directly and indirectly involved during the industrial action, excluding all those who were on leave.

This method of data collection and processing has consistently remained the same over time. The Department has to rely on the employers affected by labour disputes for detailed information on various indicators such as employment size, duration of strikes, reason given for striking, etc., which are required by 1995 Labour Relations Act. Some attempts are made to contact other parties involved in resolving the disputes. This information is also analyzed and reported. However, employers constitute a principal source of strikes data.

D5. Calculations

Working days lost

All calculations are made on the basis of information recorded on the LRA 9.2 Form. After capturing the data, the loss of working days is calculated by multiplying the number of workers involved in each stoppage by the duration of the stoppage in days lost and adding the totals for all stoppages during the reference period. For example, if during the reference period there were one stoppage, involving 2 000 workers and lasting four days, working days lost would be computed as follows:

- 2 000 worker's x 4 days = 8 000 working days lost

Working hours lost

Working hours lost is the aggregate number of working hours lost stemming from all work stoppages during the reference period. The statistic is calculated by multiplying the number of workers involved in each stoppage by the number of hours of the stoppage and summing the products thus obtained for all stoppages during the period. For example, if during the reference period there is one stoppage, involving 4 000 workers and lasting four hours and four days working hours lost would be computed as follows:

- 2 000 worker's x 4 hours lost x 4 days worked = 32 000 working hours lost

Estimated working time is computed by multiplying the employment for the period by the number of days typically worked by most employed workers during that period. In some cases, Saturdays (when customarily not worked), Sundays, and established holidays are excluded. It is also to determine the normal hours of work for groups of workers since LRA 9.2 Form provides for this. An average eight-hour day is used to represent the normal working day in the country.

Time- loss ratio (Working days lost per 1 000 employees)

- This is the number of working days lost per 1 000 employees due to strike. It is the standard method that has been used to convert working days lost into a strike rate that takes account of the size of total employment. This also enables comparisons to be made across industries and provinces that differ in employment size. For example, a country with 16 069 000 employees in December 2016 and loosing 946 323 working days will have a ratio of 58.9 arrived at as follows: 946 323/16 069 000*1 000

Measurements

The criterion used to identify a single strike and lockout is the Labour dispute in question. In line with the ILO recommendations, the Department of Labour denotes one industrial action as follows:

- A temporary work stoppage, due to one industrial action, occurring among workers in one establishment at one time;
- Temporary work stoppages, due to one industrial action, occurring among workers in several establishments at the same time;
- Temporary work stoppages, due to one industrial action, occurring among workers in one establishment at different times, in which the period between stoppages is not more than two months; and
- Temporary work stoppages, due to one industrial action, occurring among workers in several establishments at different times, in which the period between stoppages is not more than two months.

While attempts to satisfy the ILO requirements are made, the instrument of data collection (LRA 9.2 Form) remains as the point of departure, in order to meet the specific needs of the Department and the country.

LRA Form 9.2
Section 205(3)(a)
Labour Relations Act, 1995

RECORD OF STRIKE, LOCK-OUT OR PROTEST ACTION

READ THIS FIRST

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

An employer must keep a record of any strike, lock-out or protest action involving its employees.

WHO FILLS IN THIS FORM?

The Employer / relevant Employers' Organization

WHERE DOES THIS FORM GO?

The Director-General, Department of Labour, Private Bag x117, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: (012) 309 4004
Fax: (012) 309 4406
E-mail: Strikes@labour.gov.za

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

The employer must submit this form within **seven** days of the completion of the strike, lockout or protest action.

If a strike, lockout or protest action occurs in more than one workplace of a single employer then a separate form must be completed for each workplace.

RECORD OF DETAILS OF STRIKE, LOCKOUT OR PROTEST ACTION TO BE KEPT BY EMPLOYER IN TERMS OF SECTION 205(3)(a)

1) **EMPLOYER DETAILS**

Name company:..

Contact Person..

Physical address: ....

Province: ....

Tel: .... Fax: ....

E-mail address: ....

Industry: ....

Sub-Sector / Nature of business
....

2) **EMPLOYEE DETAILS**

2.1 Total number of workforce: ....

2.2 Working time ***(Please complete where applicable)***

Number of ordinary *hours* worked per day: / Shift...

Number of ordinary *days* worked per week: / Shift ....

3) **DETAILS OF THE ACTION (see definition on Page 3)**

3.1 **Nature of action:**

- ☐ Strike in company only
- ☐ Multi-employer strike
- ☐ Lockout
- ☐ Stay-away, protest action
- ☐ Other industrial action, specify ....

....

--- please turn over →

If the action was a strike. Did the employer lockout the strikers? (defensive lockout)

Yes	No

How was the industrial action resolved? ....

Was replacement labour used?

Yes	No

3.2 Strike duration:

Began: ....
(Date) *(Time)*

Ended: ....
(Date) *(Time)*

Duration in workdays (or hours if relevant) ....

3.3 Employees involved

Number of employees participating[1]: ....

Number of employees affected[2]: ....

Total work-hours lost: ....

Total wages not paid (in Rands):..

3.4 Unions involved:

Yes	No

Name of Trade Union	Number of employees involved per union
TOTAL	

--- please turn over →

3.5 Compliance with the Act

Was the action in compliance with the Act? (e.g. procedural or un-procedural)

Yes	No	Don't know

3.6 Strike reasons:

- ☐ Wages only (If the action was a wage strike, kindly indicate the following):-

  Percentage demanded by Union...........
  Percentage offered by employer ....
  Percentage agreed on by both parties.......
- ☐ Bonuses and other compensation
- ☐ Retrenchments / Dismissals
- ☐ Working conditions
- ☐ Socio-economic / political conditions
- ☐ Refusal to bargain
- ☐ Secondary action from another dispute
- ☐ Grievances
- ☐ Disciplinary matters
- ☐ Organizational rights
- ☐ Any other reason, (please specify)..

[1] **Workers *participating* are those workers who went on strike or were locked out as a result of the dispute.**

[2] **Workers *affected* are those workers not involved in the strike but could not continue with their normal duties as a result of the strike.**

Name of employer (***in full***): ....

Signature of employer: .... Date: ....

--- please turn over →

LRA Form 9.2
Record of Strike, Lockout or Protest Action
Page 4 of 4

DEFINITIONS

Strike:

The partial or complete concerted refusal to work, or the retardation or obstruction of work, by persons who are or have been employed by the same employer or by different employers, for the purpose of remedying a grievance or resolving a dispute in respect of any matter of mutual interest between employer and worker, and every reference to work in this definition includes overtime, whether it is voluntary or compulsory (section 213).

Lockout:

The exclusion by an employer of workers from the employer's workplace. For the purpose of compelling the workers to accept a demand in respect of any matter of mutual interest between employer and worker, whether or not the employer breaches those workers' contracts of employment in the course of or for the purpose of that exclusion.

Secondary strike:

A strike in support of a strike by other employees against their employer. The strikers have no issue with their employer, but that employer might be in a strong position (due to there being a close business relationship as either an important customer or supplier) to pressurise the employer who is in dispute.

Protest action:

The partial or complete refusal to work, or the retardation or obstruction of work, for the purpose of promoting or defending the socio-economic interest of workers, but not for a purpose referred to in the definition of "strike".

Stay away:

Industrial action by a group of employees in the form of absenting themselves from work without permission in support of some socio-economic issue which does not relate to their employment situation.

Work hours:

Hours during which an employee is obliged to work. Work hours lost is calculated by multiplying the number of **all workers** involved in each stoppage by the number of hours the stoppage lasted.

Working days lost:

Days during which an employee is obliged to work working days is calculated by multiplying the number of workers involved in each stoppage by the duration of the stoppage in days lost and adding the totals for all stoppages during the reference period.

NOTES


SACP
United Action
FOR SERVICE
to DEFEND AND
SAFEGUARD
VOTE ANC

employment & labour

Department:
Employment and Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA