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# Industrial Action



**CONFLICT !**



**DISAGREEMENT**



**Employee (Union)**

**Employer  
(Company)**

# Source of Industrial Conflict

## Internal

Style of management

Physical environment

Social relationship

Other facilities

Grievance

## External

Economic policy

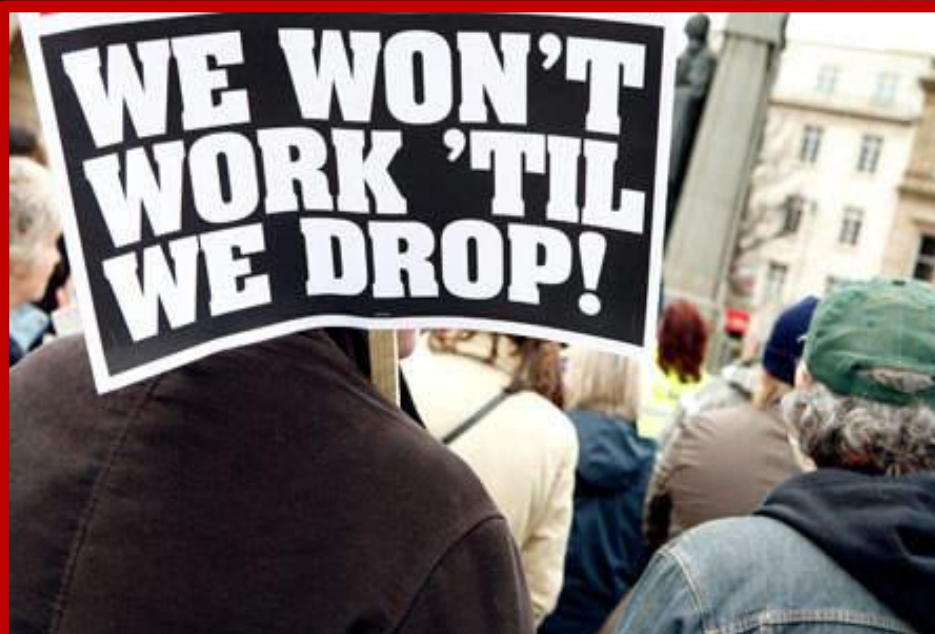
Labor legislation

Political issue

National crisis

Social inequalities





# Industrial Action

Industrial action refers collectively to any measure taken by trade unions or other organized labor meant to **reduce productivity in a workplace.**

❖ UK, Ireland and Australia →  
**Industrial action**

❖ US → **Job action**





# ILO Standards

## Convention No. 87

the right of trade unions as organizations of workers set up to further and defend their occupational interests (Article 10), to formulate their programs and organize their activities (Article 3).

This means that unions have **the right** to negotiate with employers and to express their views on economic and social issues affecting the occupational interests of their members.

J.-M. Servais, "ILO standards on freedom of association and their implementation", *International Labor Review*, Vol. 123(6), Nov.–Dec. 1984, pp. 765–781.

# Types of Industrial Action

**Strike**

**Occupation  
of Factories**

**Work-to-Rule**

**General  
Strike**

**Slowdown**

**Overtime  
Ban**

# 1. Strike

- ❖ Strike action (labor strike) is a **work stoppage** caused by the mass refusal of employees to work.
- ❖ A strike usually takes place in response to employee grievances.





# Wildcat Strike

(Poole, 1980)

This form of strike  
is **in violation of  
contract and not  
authorized by the  
union** because no  
reason or notice is  
given to employer  
before embarking  
on it.



2009, Lindsay Oil  
Refinery strike

# Sit-down Strike

(Poole, 1980)



*Flint sit-down strikers*

Flint sit-down strikers

1930, Flint sit-down  
strike by the United  
Auto workers

This is type of strike  
involve workers  
being present at  
work but **literally  
not working.**

# Constitutional vs Unconstitutional Strike

(Poole, 1980)

## Constitutional Strike

- ❖ This refers to actions that **conform** to the due procedure of the collective agreement.
- ❖ The agreement usually specifies the time and the procedure for conducting a strike by the workers.

## Unconstitutional Strike

- ❖ This is a strike action that **does not conform** to the provisions of the collective agreements or the relevant public policies.

# Official vs Unofficial Strike

(Poole, 1980)

## Official Strike

- ❖ These are strikes that are usually **authorized** by the leadership of the union.

## Unofficial Strike

- ❖ This type of strike is usually **unauthorized** by the union leadership.
- ❖ This happens because the memberships have lost confidence in the leaders and are therefore willing to exert direct pressure on the employer without the authorization of leaders.



## 2. Occupation of Factories

- ❖ Occupation of factories is a method of the workers' movement used to prevent lockouts.
- ❖ They may sometimes lead to "recovered factories", in which **the workers self-manage the factories.**



A 77-day occupation of the Ssangyong car factory in 2009 due to bankruptcy

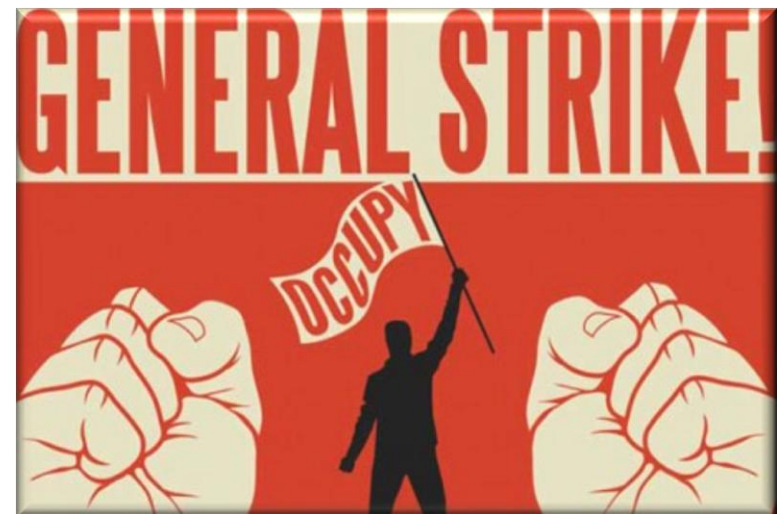
### 3. Work to Rule



- ❖ Work-to-rule is an industrial in which employees **do no more than the minimum required by the rules of their contract**, and follow safety or other regulations to the letter to cause a slowdown rather than to serve their purpose.
- ❖ This is considered less disruptive than a strike; and just obeying the rules is non-disciplinary action.
- ❖ Example : nurses refusing to answer telephones, or police officers refusing to issue citations, or refusal to work overtime.
- ❖ In some languages (e.g. Polish, Russian, Finnish and Hebrew) it is known as "**Italian strike**", as it is believed that it was first utilized in Italy in 1904. In Italy, it is known as "*sciopero bianco*" or "**white strike**".

## 4. General Strike

- ❖ A general strike is a strike action by a **critical mass of the labor force in a city, region, or country.**
- ❖ While a general strike can be for political goals, economic goals, or both, it tends to gain its momentum from the ideological or class sympathies of the participants.
- ❖ It is also characterized by participation of workers in a multitude of workplaces, and tends to involve entire communities.



## 5. Slowdown

- ❖ A slowdown (go-slow) is an industrial action in which **employees perform their duties but seek to reduce productivity or efficiency in their performance of these duties.**
- ❖ Other times slowdowns are accompanied by intentional sabotage on the part of workers to provide further disruption.
- ❖ Workers participating in a slowdown are often punished, sometimes by firing (with unpaid) and other times by law.



"Qantas engineers pledge whacky, wrong-handed strike action", Gabrielle Costa, July 13, 2011



## 6. Overtime Ban

- ❖ An overtime ban is a form of industrial action where **employees limit their working time to the hours specified in their contracts, refusing to work any overtime.**
- ❖ There is less chance of disciplinary action by the employer than there is with strikes.
- ❖ However, an overtime ban can have a significant impact on industries which normally operate outside of regular office hours, such as emergency services, public transport, or retail.

Say **NO** to   
**OVERTIME**

## 6. Overtime Ban

- ❖ An overtime ban is **similar to a work-to-rule**, in that both involve employees refusing to do more than is strictly required of them.
- ❖ However, and in contrast with a work-to-rule, when an overtime ban is in place workers may still perform duties not required of them, providing they do not go outside their contracted hours.



# Strikebreakers



- ❖ A strikebreaker (scab) is a **person who works despite an ongoing strike.**
- ❖ Strikebreakers are usually individuals who are not employed by the company prior to the trade union dispute, but rather hired prior to or during the strike to keep the organization running.
- ❖ Strikebreakers may also refer to workers (union members or not) who cross picket lines to work.

# Effects of Strike



## ❖ To the workers & union

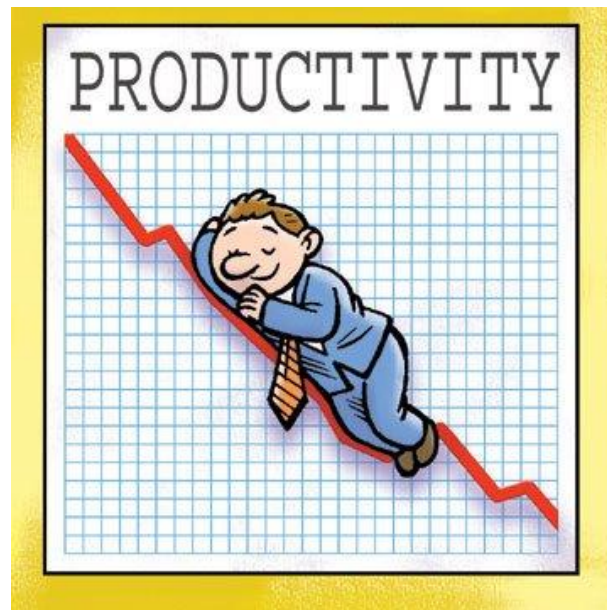
- Strike improves the economic well being of members of the trade union; it also makes the management to take the union seriously in future negotiations.
- If the union membership is divided or loses confidence, then the credibility of the strike as a powerful weapon can vanish overnight.



# Effects of Strike

## ❖ To the employer (company)

- The loss of production, loss of output, inability to meet customer's demand, inability to supply custom orders on schedule, loss of profits, and many others.



# Effects of Strike

## ❖ To the society

- The most important are the loss of national output as a result of the loss of output in the industry affected.
- The direct impact is the decelerations in the Gross National Product [GNP].
- The effects also cause political agitations on the ordinary citizens.



**Thank You !**

