

Childcare workers across the Netherlands to strike from Thursday ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV) has announced that, from Thursday, July 1, employees working in childcare, playgroups, and after-school care facilities across the Netherlands will be taking part in a national strike.

Childcare workers strike against high workload

The strike has been organised to take action against the high work pressure that many employees in the sector face, especially as a result of the ongoing coronavirus crisis. Debbie van Leiden, the FNV director for childcare, said the high workload will ultimately negatively impact the life and development of children.

“The workload is so high that childcare employees fall over in droves,” she says. “If this continues for any longer, the children themselves will eventually be the victims, because of course this also has an effect on the quality of the care”

The FNV is therefore asking for the workload to be reduced and has put forward a number of proposals for change, including reducing the number of children per class / group, hiring additional workers. The Christian National Trade Union (CNV) has already managed to secure a collective labour agreement for workers in the childcare sector, but FNV have confirmed that their strike will go ahead as planned.

Relay strikes taking place across the Netherlands

At a so-called action day in Nijmegen on June 18, workers and the FNV outlined what the strike would look like. The strike will take place in relay form, with the first strike taking place in the province of North Holland and in parts of southern Flevoland, and 35 childcare organisations have already registered to take part.

Instead of organising a number of regional strikes, FNV is looking to plan a national strike day on July 8 in Utrecht. It's not yet clear how this could affect parents or how many organisations are set to take part.

FNV has also acknowledged how the strike will impact families with children. “We regret the parents that we have to take action, but the situation has become untenable for many employees,” explained Van Leiden. Emergency care will be arranged on strike days for parents working in key jobs.

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<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/child-care-workforce> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/wages> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/working-conditions> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9065>