

Thousands of physicians in Germany go on strike, demanding pay hike



Berlin, May 10 (RHC)-- Thousands of physicians at municipal hospitals across Germany have waged a nationwide strike action demanding a wage hike and better working conditions amid the persisting price increases in consumer goods.

The work stoppage on Tuesday was called by Germany's trade union for physicians, Marburger Bund, which has demanded retroactive compensation for the high inflation as well as a 2.5-percent pay increase. Social media images of striking doctors in the city of Frankfurt showed the protesters wearing orange vests and waving Union flags in the city's Romerberg Square.

Physicians expect a “fair offer that corresponds to their high workload and takes into account the price increases since the last salary increase,” said Marburger Bund’s negotiator Christian Twardy in a statement cited in press reports. The trade union, however, emphasized that emergency medical care for all patients remained unaffected by the strike action.

After four rounds of negotiations with the Association of Municipal Employers’ Associations (VKA), the collective bargaining negotiations on the salaries of nearly 60,000 physicians at municipal hospitals still remain in progress.

According to the union’s chief negotiator however, talks between Marburger Bund and the VKA have reached a deadlock and that doctors’ patience with employers has been ‘exhausted’. The VKA has only offered a single payment of 3,000 euros as compensation for inflation, in addition to a proposed salary increase as of 2024, according to local media reports.

“We were able to make significant progress in the round of negotiations with the Marburger Bund the week before last,” Wolfgang Heyl, negotiator and chairman of the VKA group committee for hospitals and care facilities, said, rejecting the strike action as “completely unfounded.”

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