



18-02-2026 - Publication Volle Lading Group

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Agreement in principle **RST**

**2% pay rise,
2% increase in
continuous shift
allowance**

At RST, an agreement in principle has been reached for the new collective labour agreement. The term is one year. With effect from 1 January 2026, wages will increase by 2%, on top of price compensation. The allowance for continuous shift work will increase from 30% to 32% and for the others shift work, the allowance will be increased by 0.5%.

**Youth wages abolished
BBL students partially covered by the
collective labour agreement**

A number of additional improvements have been achieved for young people, which is important for unity between old and young. Young people received a lower wage from the age of 18 to 23.



Continued - Agreement in principle on RST

than older employees. This will be abolished. However, three lower pay scales will be added to the pay structure for older employees, which is less positive. In concrete terms, this means that new colleagues will take ten years instead of seven to reach the highest pay scale. This is a step forward for young people, but a step backwards for the principle of equal pay for equal work.

Part of the collective labour agreement will now also apply to BBL employees. They will accrue pension rights, receive holiday pay, and receive allowances for overtime, shift work, and working on public holidays. The demand that the entire collective labour agreement should apply to BBL employees was justified. That demand may be back on the table next year.

Maintaining combativeness

It is not yet clear whether the agreement in principle reflects the balance of power.

Because, unlike with the sjorders and APMT MVII, there was no long-term action. However, it was clear that there was a great willingness to take action, and that will have had a positive influence on the result. Colleagues will vote on the result in a referendum.

The management originally wanted a four-year collective labour agreement, while the union members demanded a two-year agreement. In January, the management changed its mind and wanted a one-year agreement due to 'uncertain times'. Because it proved impossible to buy four years of peace on the cheap, the damage to shareholders was limited to one year for the time being. What are we to make of these 'uncertain times'? It is easy for management to manipulate annual figures and threaten customers with leaving. RST colleagues would do well to remain combative: it may be needed sooner than you think!



Stop the militarisation of the port!

The militarisation of society is progressing rapidly. War propaganda is omnipresent. Soldiers are entering schools and universities to recruit soldiers – or should we say cannon fodder? Pension funds and banks are being called upon to invest in the war industry. The army has agreements with 14 hospitals to provide medical teams in case of emergency. The air force trained with F-35s at Schiphol Airport for the first time. We all received a brochure about emergency kits.

Militarisation is also spreading in the transport sector, especially in the port. In Vlissingen, the site for military transport is in tip-top condition. The military rail infrastructure in Rotterdam North and Waalhaven South is being expanded. Military rail transport is given priority over other rail transport in case of emergency. A military fuel depot in Poortugaal is being expanded by nine hectares.

Military exercises are held in the port on a regular basis. The Albrandswaard is a new 'low-altitude flight zone'. In collaboration with the port authorities, war transports in Rotterdam must run smoothly. To the west of

ECT's Euromax terminal is even getting a new terminal built exclusively for the transit of military equipment and ammunition.

In early February, closed-door consultations were held between the Ministry of Defence and representatives of the Port of Rotterdam on investments in port infrastructure. An investigation has also been launched into the contribution that the chemical industry in the port of Rotterdam can make to the production of ammunition and advanced materials. The big capitalists are allowed to help themselves to the defence pot.

If working people in the Netherlands and the rest of the world do not stand up, we are heading for war. Regional wars are increasing and becoming more intense, and there is a threat of a world war. But without working people there are no soldiers, without working people there is no war production, without working people there are no war transports.

Our young people are not cannon fodder.

Stop

war preparations Workers do not shoot at workers!

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Soap opera surrounding **HPH**

The soap opera surrounding HPH (based in Hong Kong, owner of numerous container terminals, including ECT) is far from over. The course of events is a lesson in imperialist competition. The US is taking a more aggressive stance and is not shying away from armed force. They thought they could make up for their lag in container transshipment in one fell swoop, because MSC (Italian/Swiss) and BlackRock (American) were going to take over HPH's 43 terminals outside China for 23 billion dollars. As a bonus, the US would then draw two container terminals near the Panama Canal into its sphere of influence.

This is not insignificant, because it was not for nothing that Trump threatened military 'reconquest' of the strategically important canal.

The Chinese imperialists did not let this pass. Not only did they impose penalties on HPH, they also banned the merger. Discussions in which COSCO would have a significant say came to nothing. In the meantime, CMA-CGM announced that it also wanted a share in the spin-off. HPH is now investigating whether the non-Chinese terminals

terminals can be sold individually. Meanwhile, the Panamanian Supreme Court has ruled that the lease agreement between HPH and the Panamanian state for the two terminals at the Panama Canal is invalid. Maersk immediately raised its hand to operate those terminals, and the Panamanian government immediately agreed – it seems that this had all been prepared behind the scenes. HPH has announced legal action in response.

So-called independent market authorities and judges follow the interests of one imperialist or another. Billions are being thrown around. Armed violence is looming. The redistribution of spheres of influence is at stake. Workers employed at the HPH terminals – including our colleagues at ECT – have nothing to gain from this, nor do other workers for that matter.

Workers have other interests: peace and good working conditions in a society where the big capitalists and warmongers are not in charge.

The dismantling of healthcare and social services to wage war

Few dockworkers are enthusiastic about the new government. FNV Havens published a whole list of measures that will affect dockworkers. The Sector Council for Ports will be asked *for a mandate "to take up the fight with large-scale actions and strikes. In addition, we are actively seeking cooperation with the Transport sector and other sectors in the country."*

The new government wants to dismantle social security (by six billion) and healthcare (by ten billion). The burden will be increased by the 'freedom contribution' (a war tax of 3.6 billion). All to finance preparations for war. The Jetten government wants to spend an extra two billion on the army next year, and that is set to grow to more than 19 billion extra.

Not the country of the workers

The policies of Faber, Wiersma and Keijzer will largely be continued: dismantling the rights of people fleeing war, dictatorship, hunger and environmental destruction, continuing the destruction of the environment, subsidising polluters at the expense of workers, making false promises about building affordable housing.

The police and riot police will receive an additional half a billion to maintain 'public order'. Legislation for the intelligence services will be further expanded, and the right to demonstrate will be restricted. Resistance must be suppressed. That is not the country where workers feel at home - large-scale actions and strikes must take place.

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Principles of De Volle Lading

1. We are committed to defending the interests of dock workers and young people who work in the port with aggressive demands.
2. We help organise the struggle for these interests through, among other things, the four-weekly publication of De Volle Lading.
3. We work democratically. Everyone can have their say. Friends who support the struggle of the dockworkers are welcome.
4. We strive for trade unions that are combative and democratic in defending the interests of workers.
5. We are independent, including financially. We only accept financial contributions if they are given without conditions.
6. We are open to ideas about a different society without exploitation and oppression of working people - that gives direction to our struggle.
7. We are working to strengthen international solidarity among dockworkers.

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De Volle Lading is a publication of De Volle Ladinggroep – by colleagues for colleagues in the port. At De Volle Lading, you can learn to fight against injustice and against the cause of injustice: capitalism. And feel free to throw some money in the pot to support us. De Volle Lading operates without subsidies – because we want to remain independent.

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The land of the big capitalists and their political servants

RTV Rijnmond wrote on its website: *"The municipality of Rotterdam and port authorities are positive about the plans of the new coalition of D66, CDA and VVD... which include many of the port lobby's wishes..."*. Port Alderman Robert Simons is satisfied: *"The coalition agreement shows that our joint lobbying has had an effect. We can consider this an important step forward."* Boudewijn Siemons, CEO of the Port of Rotterdam Authority, is also positive about the plans. Alderman Simons (Leefbaar Rotterdam) acts as a spokesperson for the port companies, without mentioning the social demolition and preparations for war.

This is the country where the big capitalists feel at home – and their political servants. But working people can turn the tide together.

Customs in action

of the Schoof government: a pay freeze for civil servants (165,000 people) in 2026.

Civil servants in conflict against the zero line

The Jetten government is not so different after all, because it is not reversing this cutback.

Customs officers have already carried out three work-to-rule actions in the port of Rotterdam.

Civil servants are seeing their purchasing power further eroded this year due to the pay freeze. They are right to resist.

On 14 January, a 100% check was carried out at Euromax for two hours and on 23 January at RWG. On 9 February, the action was stepped up with strikes in the ports of Rotterdam and Vlissingen and at Schiphol Airport.

Dock workers can show their solidarity by contacting customs officers and supporting their actions. Civil servants also have the right to fight against the pay freeze.

Striking is better than checking. Trade union branches can send messages of solidarity.

Customs officers are affected by one of the Schoof government's austerity measures

Dockworkers do not work for war - major work stoppage in Piraeus and other actions

In the previous issue of Volle Lading, we published the call by five port unions from Greece, Italy, the Spanish Basque Country, Morocco and Turkey for a day of action on 6 February. Under the slogan 'port workers do not work for war', the action was directed against the militarisation of ports, the deterioration of working conditions and military support for Israel. The call was widely heeded. In addition to work stoppages in Spain and Italy, the action in Piraeus was particularly noteworthy. Piraeus is Greece's most important port and is largely owned by COSCO.

The day of action was prepared for weeks by various unions, the solidarity movement against Israeli genocide in Palestine and peace activists. On 6 February, dockworkers in Piraeus downed tools. Seafarers, construction workers, shipyard workers, refinery workers and workers from other industries joined in. Work stoppages also took place in Italy. It is not yet clear exactly what actions were taken in the ports of the Basque Country, Morocco and Turkey. In Hamburg, demonstrations took place in the port and in the city centre.

Workers can prevent war

Wars and armed conflicts are on the rise. All imperialist countries are preparing themselves and increasing their armament. Their aim is to conquer and protect spheres of influence and raw materials. This also applies to the European imperialists, including the Netherlands. A dock worker told us: *"They are fighting, and we have to pay for it and take up arms."* It is the workers who can prevent this. That is what the action on 6 February made clear.

