

Hungary Audi workers end strike after securing wage deal

January 31 2019



Audi, a unit of European car giant Volkswagen, employs some 13,000 people in the western Hungarian city of Győr

Workers at the Hungarian plant of German luxury carmaker Audi went back to work Wednesday, ending a week-long walkout after reaching a

wage deal with management, the company said.

"Audi Hungaria Zrt and the independent trade [union](#) Audi Hungaria (AHFSZ) reached a deal on wages," the carmaker said in a statement, without revealing any details.

All areas of production were set to be up and running late Wednesday, the statement said.

Audi said that it was still trying to gauge the fallout from the industrial action, which is rare in an economy that relies heavily on the automotive sector.

"The aim is to reach an agreement that is acceptable to both sides and guarantee jobs in the long term," the company said.

Audi, a unit of European car giant Volkswagen, is one of Hungary's biggest exporters and employs some 13,000 staff in the western city of Győr where it has made engines since 1994.

Car-making accounts for almost a third of Hungary's total industrial output, and around 20 percent of exports.

Talks between unions and management had continued since workers downed tools last Wednesday.

AHFSZ, the biggest union with 9,000 members, had warned at the time that the stoppages could be extended if a deal was not forthcoming.

At the start of wage negotiations in September, unions had been demanding an 18-percent wage increase.

According to AHFSZ, workers at a Mercedes factory in Kecskemet,

central Hungary, received a 22-percent wage increase for 2019 without having to resort to strike action.

Since Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government tightened strike rules in 2012, industrial action has been rare in Hungary.

After new changes to labour laws were passed by parliament in December, unions across the economy have threatened coordinated strike action.

That legislation increases the amount of overtime employers can demand from [workers](#) and has been dubbed a "slave law" by unions, [political parties](#), and civil groups who have held a series of street demonstrations in protest.

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