

Industrial Unrest (1890–1913)

Abstract

With the expiration of the Anti-Socialist Law on September 30, 1890, the Socialist movement in Germany gathered strength. The Social Democratic Party encouraged organized resistance to factory conditions, and strikes proliferated, especially after the turn of the century.

Source

I. Strikes, Lockouts, and “Non-Confrontational Movements,” 1890–1913

Year	Strikes incl. Lockouts ^{1,2}			Calculated number of participants ^{3a}	Strikes ⁴			Calculated for participants ^{3a}
	Number	Participants	Duration ³		Number	Participants	Duration ³	
1890/91 ⁶	226	38,536	1,348					
1892	73	3,022	507					
1893	116	9,356	568					
1894	131	7,328	879					
1895	204	14,032	1,030					
1896	483	128,808	1,923					
1897	578	63,119	1,921					
1898	985	60,162	4,848					
1899	976	100,779	3,976					
1900	852	115,711	1,234,025	65,761	806	101,081	1,051,159	53,346
1901	727	48,522	1,194,553	38,913	692	40,062	1,070,278	32,825
1902	861	55,713	964,317	48,159	805	48,922	847,121	43,239
1903	1,282	121,593	2,622,232	88,954	1,200	75,830	1,109,461	56,818
1904	1,625	135,957	2,120,154	128,700	1,513	104,555	1,512,886	93,121
1905	2,323	507,964	7,362,802	414,703	2,010	363,917	5,565,546	278,882
1906	3,480	316,042	6,317,675	301,590	3,059	222,686	3,991,606	212,562
1907	2,792	281,030	5,122,467	274,052	2,469	176,292	2,147,695	170,456
1908	2,052	126,883	2,045,585	105,859	1,795	66,307	1,139,636	60,021
1909	2,045	131,244	2,247,512	121,171	1,839	96,750	1,587,257	89,110
1910	3,194	369,011	9,037,575	341,994	2,224	142,113	2,193,452	133,455
1911	2,914	325,253	6,864,240	280,073	2,707	211,896	4,359,062	184,829
1912	2,825	479,589	4,776,818	304,979	2,469	397,490	3,447,729	240,763
1913	2,600	248,986	5,672,034	196,460	2,173	177,594	4,139,720	151,121

II. Strikes, Lockouts, and “Non-Confrontational Movements,” 1890–1913

Year	Lockouts ⁴		Duration ³	Calculated number of participants ^{3a}	Non-confrontational movements ⁵		Strike participants ⁷ (official statistics)
	Number	Participants			Number	Participants	
1890/91 ⁶							
1892							
1893							
1894							
1895							
1896							
1897							
1898							
1899							104,636
1900	46	14,630	182,866	8,927			131,888
1901	35	8,460	124,275	6,088			60,676
1902	56	6,791	117,196	4,910			64,217
1903	82	45,763	1,512,771	32,036			120,876
1904	112	31,402	607,286	35,579			137,240
1905	253	144,047	1,797,256	135,821	2,968	382,510	526,810
1906	421	93,356	2,320,069	89,028	4,647	601,706	349,327
1907	323	104,738	2,374,772	103,596	5,067	525,235	273,597
1908	257	60,576	905,949	45,838	3,607	449,434	112,110
1909	206	34,494	660,255	32,061	4,507	348,961	119,849
1910	970	226,898	6,244,123	208,539	6,496	656,531	369,809
1911	207	113,357	2,505,178	95,244	6,756	686,416	356,163
1912	356	82,099	1,329,089	64,216	7,136	774,769	481,094
1913	427	71,392	1,532,314	45,339	7,372	965,573	311,048

1) The editors (Hohorst, et. al.) would like to thank Klaus Tenfelde for preparing these tables.

2) For the entire period in question, the figures for the first three categories also include lockouts, but not non-confrontational movements.

3) Duration of the strikes until 1899 in weeks (= sum total of the duration of all strikes, regardless of the number of participants); beginning in 1900 (in all categories): loss of work time in days (calculation based on the number of participants).

3a) The statistics of the "Generalkommission" determine the loss of work time in days only for a certain number of participants, which fluctuates between 56.8% and 97.5% of the total number of striking workers.

4) Separate counting possible only after 1900.

5) That is to say, "movements without work stoppage;" recorded beginning in 1905 and not included in the preceding figures for the total number of strikes.

6) For these years the data has been recorded together.

7) The official strike statistics are included because of the at times astonishing difference between its numbers and those of the statistics compiled by the unions. They begin in 1899 (see *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs N.F.*, vol. 134, Berlin 1900, pp. I-XI). While the statistics of the “Generalkommission” recorded only the strikes in which members of its trade associations participated, the official strike statistics generally counted all strikes. Still, in some years the number of participants falls below that of the “Generalkommission,” which criticized that not all workers’ struggles were recorded.

For a comparison between the official and the union strike statistics see: C. Heiss, “Die deutsche Streikstatistik,” *Archiv für soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik* 17 (1902): 150–168; M. Meyer, “Zur Reform der Streikstatistik,” *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, 3. Folge 37 (1909): 204–218; Karl Oldenberg, article “Arbeitseinstellungen in Deutschland,” in *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, vol. 1., 3rd ed. (Jena, 1909), pp. 927–964, esp. 948–957; also: “Die Streiks nach der amtlichen und der gewerkschaftlichen Statistik,” regularly in *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission der Gewerkschaften Deutschlands*; e.g., vol. 23 (1913): 793–799. Finally, on the state of research: Hartmut Kaelble and Heinrich Volkmann, “Konjunktur und Streik während des Übergangs zum Organisierten Kapitalismus in Deutschland,” *Zeitschrift für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften* 92 (1972): 513–544, esp. 513 note 1, p. 515 note 5.

Source: (for all columns except the last): *Correspondenzblatt der Generalkommission der Gewerkschaften Deutschlands*, 11 (1901), p. 454; 24 (1914), Appendix, pp. 282–284; (for the last column): *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, Vol. 279, p. 1; printed in Gerd Hohorst, Jürgen Kocka, and Gerhard Ritter, eds. *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1870–1914*. Munich, 1975, Vol. 2, pp. 132–34.

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