

European Spring? Germany Braces For Major Strikes While France Burns



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The "winter of discontent" that has been sweeping across Europe has now escalated into a "spring of discontent," with strikes and protests set to spread from France, Greece, and other surrounding countries to Germany.

According to [Reuters](#), Germany's Verdi union and the railway and transport union EVG are preparing to unleash paralyzing strikes on the country's airports and railways next Monday.

Verdi is negotiating for 2.5 million public sector workers, including ones at airports and other public transport hubs. The union has demanded higher wages due to persistent inflation pressures. EVG is negotiating for 230,000 employees at railway company Deutsche Bahn and bus companies.



Meanwhile, a recession looms for Europe's largest economy, which finds itself in the midst of an inflationary crisis. After experiencing a 0.4% GDP contraction in the fourth quarter of 2022, it's anticipated that the economy will once again contract in the first quarter.

"German economic activity will probably fall again in the current quarter," the Bundesbank said. "However, the decline is likely to be less than in the final quarter of 2022."

Two consecutive quarters of negative growth indicate recession and come as inflation weighs heavily on consumption. The combination of the two crushes living standards and is sparking a wave of discontent.

While Germany braces for strikes and protests next week, France, Europe's third-largest economy, is [already burning](#) as President Emmanuel Macron rammed through unpopular pension reform.

With growing instability in Western nations and the threat of a broadening banking crisis, the primary concern is whether NATO is adequately equipped to handle future conflicts.

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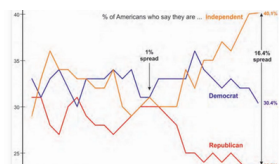
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