

Wages

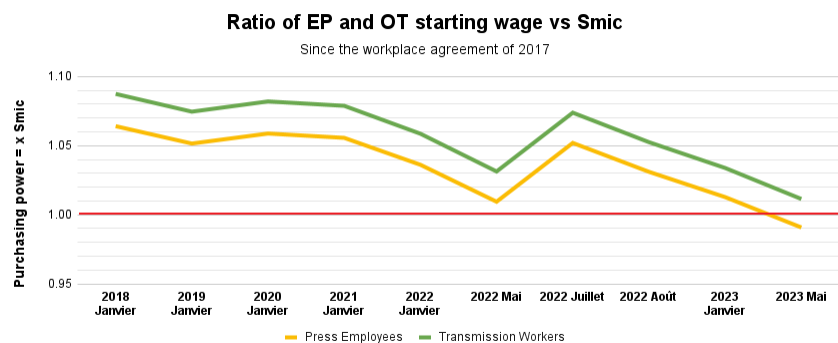
Happy May Day! AFP under minimum wage!



May 1 is the holiday for workers. It is the day we celebrate the fruits of long struggle for dignified work conditions. Such as paid vacations. The 40-hour work week (even 35 in France). Retirement. Minimum wages. So, it is particularly shameful that the AFP's pay scale falls below the minimum wage level on none other than May 1!

France's minimum wage (SMIC) rises by 2.19% on Monday to take into account inflation, rising to **€1,747.20** per month. The lowest entry wage on AFP's pay scales is **€1,731.16** for a press employee (EP).

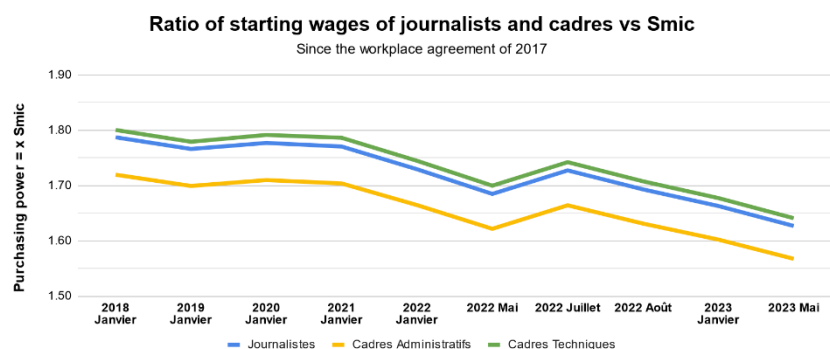
The entry wage for transmission workers (OT) will be just €20 euros above the minimum wage.



To our knowledge, this is the first time on of AFP's pay scales has fallen below SMIC. But the same trend is visible for other staff categories, with the entry wage falling closer to SMIC as the minimum wage is regularly adjusted for inflation. In other words, our purchasing power is falling.

Management will undoubtedly try to minimize this by saying it doesn't hire anyone at this level, with those professions having disappeared. But that doesn't stop *the erosion of purchasing power all along our pay scales.*

Today, our salaries can't buy what they could last summer, when our wages were last raised, not to mention five years ago.



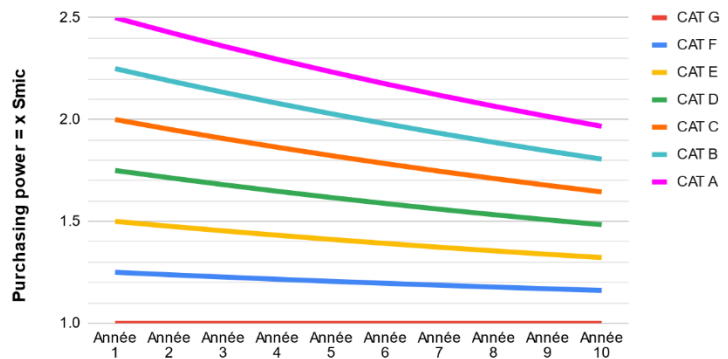
AFP will probably apply a wage hike currently being negotiated at branch level (1.0-1.5% depending on wage level) so pay scales climb back above SMIC. But such a hike is mandatory only at the bottom of our lowest pay scales. Most will have to wait until wage talks resume in September. A risk is that management will again offer a wage hike of the same amount to everyone. Our last two wage hikes were like this, including the €70 raise last summer, which kept the EP pay scale falling below SMIC in August.

Chutes and Ladders

Last year some argued that this type of wage hike was preferable as it favors those who earn the least. €70 is worth much more to someone taking home the minimum wage than someone who earns three times that amount. That's certainly true.

The table alongside shows where this logic will take us over time. It is a simulation of a pay scale with several levels. Each year, category G is raised 5% in line with inflation. The other categories get the amount in euros as category G. By the end of the 10 years, the purchasing power of category A has fallen to that category C started out — a difference of €1,000 euros when starting out. Sliding down a chute like in the children's game to fall further behind. This is already happening to us. *SUD* calculated that journalists have already been knocked back roughly one category in terms of purchasing power. But it is also the least costly option for management to keep the pay scale above the minimum wage.

Chutes: Everyone receives the same amount and most lose purchasing power



Sliding down a chute like in the children's game to fall further behind. This is already happening to us. *SUD* calculated that journalists have already been knocked back roughly one category in terms of purchasing power. But it is also the least costly option for management to keep the pay scale above the minimum wage.

What we need is for our wages to follow the inflation rate over the medium term. Let's re-run the simulation. This time, the entire pay scale is raised 5% each year. What we get is a ladder. Each pay category keeps its purchasing power. What this means, as someone gets promoted, they get a boost in purchasing power that doesn't disappear. Like in the game, the ladder lets us move ahead.

Ladders : All wage categories receive the same % increase — purchasing power stable



When wage talks resume at AFP, *SUD* expects much more than a small boost. *We expect more than just an increase that more than compensates for our loss of purchasing power to inflation over the past few months. We need a real reevaluation of the cost of our public interest mission with the conclusion of a new aims and means contract (COM) that would allow AFP to do this for staff worldwide.*

Paris, April 27, 2023

SUD-AFP (Solidarity-Unity-Democracy)

