



Language

This sub-section concentrates on a few nationally significant strikes, starting with the strike by the Californian grape pickers for minimum economic justice and full union representation. It also covers a strike with major political implications, the 1984-85 British miners' strike to defend their industry and jobs against extensive pit closures. Strikes have occurred in many parts of the world resisting privatization (for example successive strikes by South Korean rail workers since the early 2000s) and other neoliberal economic policies; these fall under sub-section A.7. One recent strike of national significance that qualifies for this section is the 2012 Marikana platinum mine workers' strike in South Africa. This was politically important because the wild cat strike for higher wages demonstrated disillusion with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), seen as too close to the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and accused of selling out to the mine owners. The strikers refused representation by the NUM. The strike led to an alternative union, the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union. Above all Marikana made headlines round the world when on 16 August 2012 (after several days of demonstrations in which eight miners and two policemen were killed) police shot 34 striking miners – widely compared to the mass killings of the apartheid era.

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