



## **New collective agreement reached in the early morning of the 08<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 in the North-West German Steel Industry**

The new agreement for the North-West German steel-workers was reached in the fourth encounter with the employers association AGV Stahl in the night from 07<sup>th</sup> to 08<sup>th</sup> of July at 06:00 o'clock in the morning following nearly twelve hours of negotiations in Gelsenkirchen.

Around 350 steel workers and apprentices turned out to support the demands in the fourth round in Gelsenkirchen on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

The whole week before the fourth encounter, IG Metall launched powerful token strikes in two collective bargaining regions (the Northwest and East Germany). More than 16,000 steel workers participated in the token strikes.

The employers specially showed a stiff resistance towards the demand for the extension and adjustment of the collective agreement of partial retirement and the demand for a collective agreement which regulates working conditions and use of sub-contracts for work and services (Werkverträge). The first offer of wage increase provided at 01:00 o'clock in the night of the fourth round was less than the amount needed to compensate for the inflation rate and was completely unacceptable for IG Metall! This insufficient offer almost led to the collapse of the negotiation.

In the early morning of the 08<sup>th</sup> of July in the crucial fourth negotiation round the breakthrough was obtained after the threat by IG Metall to call out the steel workers for an unlimited strike.

The new agreement for some 75,000 workers of the steel industry in North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Bremen includes the following elements:

### **Wages**

- Wage increase of 2.3 per cent from 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2014 till 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2015 (10 Months) for all blue and white collar workers.
- Wage increase of another 1.7 per cent from 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2015 till 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015 (6 months) for all blue and white collar workers.
- Disproportional wage increase of 36 € for all apprentices from 1<sup>st</sup> of July till 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015. This is the equivalent of an increase of 4 per cent of the apprentice's wage in the fourth year of apprenticeship.
- June 2014 is a so called "Zero-Month" without wage increase. The former agreement expired 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2014.
- The wage agreement is valid from 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2014 till 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015 (17 months).

## **Extension of the collective agreement on secure employment (TV Besch)**

The collective agreement on secure employment has been extended **till 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2018**. This agreement includes the possibility of working time reduction from 35 to 28 hours per week with part-compensation of wages to avoid job losses, as well as the guarantee of unlimited employment of apprentices after completion of their apprenticeship.

## **Partial retirement**

The collective agreement on partial retirement has been extended **till 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015** and adjusted to the new legislation of retirement. So called cases of incidents and gaps can be avoided with the modified agreement. No worker with an existing or a future contract of partial retirement will be worse-rated by the new legislation.

## **Collective agreement which regulates working condition and use of sub-contracts for work and services (Werkverträge)**

For the first time IG Metall has signed a collective sector agreement, which regulates working conditions and the use of sub-contracts for work and services (Werkverträge). This collective agreement extends codetermination and workers' rights. It includes the following elements:

- No misuse of sub-contracts.
- A steel company must examine very carefully the 'make or buy' decision and give the reasons for the decision to take a sub-contractor to the works council.
- Fair wages: Steel companies are obliged to contract only sub-contractors (including sub-sub-contractors) with tariff commitment (with a trade union belonging to the DGB confederation) or paying at least the minimum wage.
- Sub-contractors must approve the working time standards.
- Instructions of working safety must be given in good time prior to employment of sub-contracted workers.
- Sub-contracted workers have the right to complain to the works council of the steel company.

This collective agreement is valid from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2015 till 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2016 and is also an element of industriAll's common demand FOR MORE SECURE EMPLOYMENT, AGAINST PRECARIOUS WORK.

Immediately after the successful negotiations the collective bargaining commission of the **North-West German steel** industry discussed the above-mentioned result in the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2014. After extensive discussions among IG Metall's members in the steel companies the result of the negotiations was adopted by the collective bargaining commission of the North-West German steel industry with a huge majority in the meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2014.

The collective bargaining commission of the **East German steel industry** has decided in the endorsement of the result of the negotiations of the North-West German steel industry unanimously in the meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 following previous discussions among IG Metall's members in the East German steel works.

The negotiations in the **Saarland steel industry** will start on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September after the summer break. The collective bargaining commission of the Saarland steel industry has made the claims:

- Wage increase of 5 per cent for 12 months.
- Adjustment of the collective agreement on partial retirement to the new legislation of retirement.
- Collective agreement to regulate working conditions and use of sub-contracts for work and services (Werkverträge).

An extension of the collective agreements on partial retirement and secure employment is not necessary because these agreements for the Saarland steel industry have not expired.

You can find more information, interviews and pictures of the warning strikes using the links below: [www.tarifunde-stahl.de](http://www.tarifunde-stahl.de) and <http://www.youtube.com/user/igmetallnrw>

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