



First settlement in the metal technology subsector during the 2022 autumn collective bargaining round in Austrian metal sector

After 12 hours' intensive negotiations, on 4 November 2022 the joint negotiating team of our trade unions PRO-GE and GPA finally reached the conclusion of the first collective agreement in the fourth round with the employer organisation of the largest subsector in metal industry, the Association of the Metal Technology Industry (FMTI).

The overall conditions of this year's autumn bargaining round were extremely challenging and not comparable to previous years. Everything was different this year: We were faced with a monthly inflation rate of 11 percent in September, the highest since 1952, and at the same time the highest real economic growth by 4,3 percent in decades was forecast. While major companies in metal industry achieved record results, workers in the companies have been confronted with exorbitant living costs.

On the eve of the negotiations, on 3 November, some 2000 works council representatives gathered at a nationwide conference to discuss the current state of negotiations and decide on eventual industrial action to step up the pressure on the employers.

The overwhelming support from the shop floor for the demands put forward by the joint negotiating team of PRO-GE and GPA and their resolve to start warning strikes on 6th, 7th and 8th November in the event of a failure of the negotiation round on 3rd November, set the stalled negotiations in motion again.

After 12 hours, the PRO-GE and GPA unions achieved strong and stable wage increases.

The results at a glance:

- Collectively agreed minimum wages will increase by 7 percent. On average the increase will be 7,44 percent
- **New minimum wage thus stands at 2,236.16 euros**
- Actual wages will increase between 7.0 to 8.9 percent
- The apprentice income will increase in three stages by November 2024 to 1,050 euros (1st year of apprenticeship), 1,270 euros (2nd), 1,625 euros (3rd) and 2,110 euros (4th year of apprenticeship).

Actual wages- higher pay rise for low and middle pay brackets

All wages/salaries will be raised by 5,4 percent in a first step and in a second step by an additional fixed amount of €75. This results in an increase of around 8.9 percent for the lowest wage group. The average increase is 7.44 percent.

- Allowances will also be increased by 7 percent.
- The bonuses for the second shift and third shift will be increased from 0.670 to 0.837 euros per hour and from 2.524 to 2.770 euros per hour on November 1, 2022, according to last year's agreement. A working group will be established by the collective bargaining partners modernising the pay brackets' system, currently in place.

Pressure from the companies made the conclusion possible in the first place

The first settlement with FMTI subsector was preceded by works council conferences and works meetings with strike decisions. "The first conclusion for the uniform metal industry collective agreement was hard work. The overall package that was achieved was made possible by the unity of the shop floor representatives and the solidarity of all workers in the sector," says PRO-GE chief negotiator Wimmer, referring in this context to the inadequate employer's offer of 4.1 percent during the last three rounds. Negotiations with the other employers' associations in the metal industry will continue in the coming days. The first agreement for the metal technology sector is seen as an informal bench marker for the subsequent negotiations in the five remaining subsectors in metal industry.

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