

## **Norway – Fellesforbundet sets standard with agreement in industry.**

April 2024

Fellesforbundet, which every two years spearheads collective bargaining in Norway on behalf of all the country's sectoral unions, concluded a significant new agreement last Sunday. In Norway, there is a mid-term revision in the middle of each two-year period in which wages are adjusted upwards. The pay rise agreed in 2024 therefore only applies to the next twelve months.

After three years of reduced real wages, it was imperative this time to reach a deal with a pay rise above inflation and in addition a training reform that can help companies and their workers tackle the necessary transitions of their production. Negotiations assisted by the state mediator went on for more some 17-18 hours after the original deadline before an acceptable conclusion could be reached.

The union and its employer counterpart parties agreed a deal which gives 5.2% more to the workers. There will be a high central supplement, an extra supplement for those on low incomes and a special increase for offshore workers. With an estimated inflation of 4.1%, this result represents a clear improvement in purchasing power. And it is a fair wage settlement, where low-paid workers are lifted, and inequality will be reduced.

Another of Fellesforbundet's main demands was a training reform aiming to ensure expertise in the companies for restructuring, the green shift, technological development, and competitiveness. In this field, the new agreement marks a historic breakthrough. The government will contribute financially to putting such a reform in place to build future-oriented industries in Norway. The solution includes development of relevant training courses and protection against income loss for the workers who participate in the courses.

A strike was avoided to the relief of both parties. Less than a week since the deal was concluded in the manufacturing industries, other sectors have followed suit with similar results without conflict. All agreements will be subject to ballots by unions members. Later, local bargaining will take place at company level.

**Edited by industriAll Europe.**