Germany: Bridging bonus of €1,400 to chemical workers

April 2022

Collective bargaining in the German chemical industry is suspended until October 2022 due to the unclear situation linked to the Ukraine, high energy prices and rising inflation. However, all workers will receive a one-time payment of 1,400 euros as an interim solution. This bonus represents an average ‘increase’ of about 5.3% over 7 months.

The extra payment, which applies to 580,000 workers in the industry, will be paid out by May 2022 at the latest. Companies with economic problems can reduce the payment to 1,000 euros. Apprentices will receive 500 euros. Lower wage groups benefit more than average from the bridge payment as it is a fixed amount and not a percentage. The low-paid are also the ones who are particularly suffering from the current price spikes.

In this manner, the approximately 1,900 companies and IGBCE are reacting to the unclear developments and great uncertainty for workers and companies alike. - We had to find a solution that combines inflation relief with job security, explained Michael Vassiliadis, President of the IGBCE. Our goal remains a permanent increase in wages this year. But it gives us the breathing space we need to wait for the geopolitical and economic developments of the coming months and continue this round of collective bargaining in the autumn. IGBCE had entered negotiations with demands for a pay rise above the inflation. Since then, the inflation rate has reached 7.3% over twelve months.

In addition to the one-time payment, the parties have also agreed:

- Bonuses for night shifts to be increased by 20 percent.
- Rights to retirement for part-time workers
- Three million euros to be added to a training program for apprentices.
- Shorter working hours for employees aged 55 and over.
- An in-depth evaluation of mobile work on health, working time, productivity etc.

Finally, the social partners in the sector have agreed on a donation of one million euros to recognise qualifications of refugees from Ukraine more quickly and to offer more language courses.

Edited by industriAll Europe