

# Warning strikes at Deutsche Post: Build independent action committees!

Martin Nowak  
2 February 2025

Contract bargaining for approximately 170,000 Deutsche Post employees began in early January.

Verdi [United Services Trade Union] is calling for a straight increase of 7 percent with a 12-month contract term. The smaller DPVKOM union is demanding 8 percent or a €350 [\$US359] minimum increase in monthly wages, also over a period of 12 months.

According to Verdi's deputy chairperson Andrea Kocsis, the wage increases are urgently needed because the pay of many employees is below the median income in Germany. The increasing physical strain caused by ever-increasing parcel volumes is also to be rewarded with three additional days of holiday and a further day of holiday exclusively for union members.

According to Kocsis, after the second round of negotiations, "there was little movement and no tangible results." Verdi announced the first warning strikes in a press release on January 24, describing the statement by Deutsche Post management that the employees' demands were unaffordable as "unacceptable."

"Our members will respond with warning strikes," Kocsis continued. "The message is clear: we are serious, and we are prepared to fight for our demands." The third round of contract bargaining is scheduled for February 12-13.

Most postal workers are likely to have a bitter laugh stuck in their throats at these words. In view of the experiences at the last contract bargaining round in 2023, every postal worker knows what it means when Verdi is "serious."

Verdi's grandiose announcements are not worth the paper they are written on.

During the 2023 contract negotiations, Verdi ensured that low wages would be cemented until 2025, giving the Deutsche Post executive board a further reduction

in real wages.

Prior to that, in 2023, postal workers showed their high level of militancy by voting 86 percent against the miserable offer and in favour of an unlimited strike. Faced with this massive rejection, Verdi had to deploy its entire repertoire of tricks and deception. The union ignored the clear strike vote and, after further talks behind closed doors, presented an almost identical offer, which it is now claiming is the maximum possible.

Two years ago, Verdi mobilised its works council representatives and shop stewards, also using a video conference in which 2,500 employees participated at times, to preach incessantly about how there was "no alternative." Verdi then claimed that in the second ballot 61.7 percent had suddenly voted in favour.

The Postal Workers Action Committee formed in April 2023, said at the time, "The entire second strike vote was a complete fraud. We rejected Deutsche Post's first offer and voted 86 percent in favour of strike action. Verdi ignored this membership vote and, with the Deutsche Post executive board, repackaged the same offer and resubmitted it for acceptance."

The action committee revealed how the union bureaucrats were working hand in hand with the government and management to achieve two things in the contract bargaining: "First, to continue the years-long reduction in real wages and, second, to prevent a strike."

As part of the corporatist "Concerted Action," to which Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democratic Party, SPD) had invited representatives of business and trade unions, "everyone" agreed that wages must not rise. Only in this way could the billions be made available for military rearmament and the record profits of the corporations swelling in times of inflation.

With an early federal election in February 2025, big business and the establishment political parties want to shift politics much farther to the right. The candidates for chancellor are competing to see who will spend the most on war and armaments, with the range extending from tripling the defence budget (Robert Habeck, Green) to quadrupling it (Alice Weidel, Alternative for Germany, AfD). This will inevitably go hand in hand with the most extensive social attacks since the end of the Second World War.

Party and trade union leaders are therefore agreed that the election campaign must not be overshadowed by major strikes, and that every form of resistance to the government's war and austerity plans needs to be suppressed. The hypocritical, belligerent posturing of the union officials should therefore be met with distrust by all postal workers, regardless of whether they are members of Verdi, DPVKOM or have no union affiliation.

The smaller DPVKOM union is acting particularly aggressively, having already called for warning strikes on January 7 and 9. Around 300 employees at the Magdeburg branch and 50 postal workers in the Karlsruhe region responded to the call. Since it accepted the Verdi settlement in the last round of collective bargaining and renounced all further industrial action, the DPVKOM leadership is now apparently trying to appear particularly combative.

Verdi and DPVKOM have already made it clear whose side they are on. Postal workers should therefore waste no time in taking the organisation of strikes and industrial action into their own hands. Only in this way can they effectively represent their interests. They must build independent rank-and-file action committees in all distribution centres, depots and offices to break the control of the Verdi apparatus.

*Join the Post Action Committee. Contact us via Whatsapp to the mobile number +491633378340 or register using the form.*



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**