

# GENERAL STRIKE ON 9/11

## Purchasing power UP, energy prices DOWN !



## To protect our purchasing power and for a fair energy policy

The purchasing power of individuals and households has come under significant pressure recently. Many people will have to bleed themselves dry to pay for their energy and fuel bills over the coming winter. Government measures and our index system will certainly help to soften the blow to some extent, but they are far from being enough to preserve the purchasing power of the ordinary person in the street. In the meantime, we are forced to watch the (European) energy multinationals banking billions in profits at the expense of the community, while fundamental energy market reforms remain on the back burner.

The ABVV is crying out for additional efforts to be made to help **protect our dwindling purchasing power** and to arrive at a **fair energy policy**.



### Why are we striking?

Let's face it, thanks to the socialists in government and under pressure from the trade unions, we have been able to claw back a number of favourable measures:

- The guarantee of having the **index** and the **link between social benefits and developments in welfare** (such as pensions)
- Measures designed to contain the growth in energy bills:
  - the permanent reduction in **VAT on energy at 6%**
  - **extension of the social tariff for energy**
  - **contribution of 1000 EUR towards energy bills for small businesses** (for the period from November 2022 to March 2023).
- **Windfall tax on energy companies**, due to bring in more than 3 billion EUR
- **The solidarity contribution payable by banks and the abolition of the notional interest deduction**
- **The additional Social Security contribution to be paid by companies** that make abusive use of one-day contracts



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However, the harsh reality is that these measures are not enough to protect our purchasing power in structural terms, let alone strengthen it. In addition, right-wing politicians and employer federations continue to attack the automatic indexation of wages. **We think that's unacceptable!**

The federal government is also taking other measures that we believe are equally **unacceptable**:

- **Cutting time credits** (in the case of 'caring for a child under the age of 8'), **parental leave** and **healthcare**. The **unemployment scheme with company supplements (RCC/SWT)** is also becoming more expensive.
- The full exemption of employer contributions that companies have to pay on wage increases following indexation in the first half of 2023. This measure applies without distinction to all companies, including those that make eye-watering profits, and is **costing the taxpayer 1 billion EUR**.
- The system of **flexi-jobs and student working** is being **expanded** (to the detriment of fixed and regular employment).



Here are our proposals!

## LEAVE THE INDEX ALONE

Employers and right-wing political parties must **stop questioning the automatic indexation of our wages**. No more systematically passing on the costs to the community, while the profits are privatised.

## REVIEW DE LAW ON WAGE STANDARDS

Unions are not living on another planet, but we demand respect for social dialogue. We fully understand that many companies in the current crisis only have limited scope for increasing wages in excess of the index. But it is the responsibility of the unions and employers – and no one else – to conduct negotiations on this subject across all sectors. **Also, in times of crisis like now, we must also have the ability to negotiate a pay rise in companies where this margin does exist.**

## PUT A BRAKE ON THE CRAZY DEREGULATION OF THE ENERGY MARKET

Europe has finally decided to put a cap on gas prices. The time has come to put the agreement reached into practical effect as soon as possible. The price of gas must go down!

The ABVV has been hammering on the same nail for a long time. If the bosses and (the right-wing parties of) the government refuse to listen to our demands, we will have no other option but to go on strike. On 9/11, we will down tools to achieve our proposals for increased purchasing power and a fair energy policy. We hope that you will join us, too - because it is only when we are together that we are strongest!

**Want to take part in the strike, but don't know how?**

Contact the union representative in your company or get in touch with your local section of ABVV-Metaal of the BTB-ABVV



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