

Strike at the university application service center uni-assist e.V.

ver.di, the united service union, calls for a three days strike at uni-assist e.V. beginning Tuesday, 28th of January. Ver.di is currently negotiating with the management of uni-assist e.V. to agree on a company based collective agreement on behalf of the organized workforce at uni-assist e.V. After 10 month of bargaining talks, the negotiations reached a stagnation. Although both sides want a collective agreement, the positions are still far apart from each other.

ver.di wants the German Collective Labour Agreement for the Civil Service at the federal level (TVöD Bund) as a relevant number of employees is already paid according to its pay scale. The employers side wants the German Collective Labour Agreement for the Civil Service at the regional level (TV-L), which would incorporate a worse wage development for those paid according to the TVöD Bund pay scale so far. The second big issue is the company pension scheme as uni-assist wants to exclude VBL, a pension scheme used in all collective agreements for public service in Germany. Furthermore, the employer side stayed vague about an alternative concept. Concessions made by ver.di during the last negotiation were refused by uni-assist e.V. Further demands are the reduction of weekly working hours, clear and reliable agreements on temporary employment and an advantage arrangement for ver.di members.

After having launched a huge petition with signatures of 80% of the current workforce for the TVöD Bund in November 2019, now members voted for warning strikes. Jana Seppelt, chief negotiator of ver.di: “The organized workers know that longer strikes will also have some impact on international applicants but after the last months of fruitless negotiations there just is no other possibility. The employers side has to start to take workers seriously.”

Background:

uni-assist e.V. is a registered association which evaluates international student applications for more than 180 German universities. It is a spin-off of university services under no collective agreement, whereby a relevant part of the workforce earns just above minimum wage. The core responsibility of the university application service center is the administrative preparation and preliminary evaluation of student applications for its members. uni-assist e.V. maintains an office in Berlin with approximately 150 permanent and 150 temporary employees for the summer season.

More information: <https://verdi-uni-assist.de/>