Tarifrunde Chemie 2026

To the trade union shop stewards

RECOMMENDATION OF THE MAIN EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR THE 2026 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ROUND

Dear colleagues,

the 2026 collective bargaining round for the chemical and pharmaceutical industry is taking place amid major changes and challenges. Germany and Europe increasingly have to stand their ground against competition from China and the USA. Germany as a business location is facing not only cyclical but also structural challenges.

In particular, raw material and energy prices in Germany remain uncompetitive, and infrastructure is outdated in many areas. Additionally, the CO_2 price under the European Emissions Trading Scheme is increasingly burdensome for energy-intensive industries in the global market. There is a growing sense among our members that they have to pay the price while others move ahead.

That is why the chemical industry's collective bargaining round is starting under the motto:

Developing incomes – Securing industrial jobs.
At its first meeting following the congress, the newly elected main executive board (Hauptvorstand) agreed on the recommendation for demands that will now serve as the basis for discussions in the member and shop steward meetings.

The main executive board recommends:

1.
An increase in income for employees and apprentices covered by collective agreements to further boost

2.
Development of collectively bargained instruments to safeguard employment.

Rationale

1. **As a result of the pandemic and the rise in energy prices following Russia's attack on Ukraine, employees' real incomes have declined. The last collective bargaining round reversed this trend, but the gap has not yet been fully closed.** At the same time, the German economy has been stagnating for nearly three years, with some recessive episodes observed during this period. Due to its high energy intensity and export ratio, the chemical industry is among the sectors under particular pressure. In addition to energy prices, the persistent weakness in international demand—further exacerbated by U.S. tariff policies and the resulting uncertainty—has emerged as a key obstacle to growth. However, several companies are beginning to show positive signs. Expectations for the coming year are brightening, and economic growth is anticipated. Both the special fund for infrastructure and climate protection (Sondervermögen „Infrastruktur und Klimaschutz") and the "investment booster" for corporate investments are expected to help raise Germany's economic growth to around 1 to 1.5 percent next year. Nevertheless, uncertainty remains high. The goal of the upcoming collective bargaining round must be a sustainable strengthening of purchasing power. This will also stimulate domestic consumer demand and contribute to economic recovery.

2. **In IGBCE's organizational area, more than 150 companies have already implemented or at least announced shutdowns of machines and facilities. Around 90 plants are facing the threat of closure. Given the persistently difficult conditions, the international competitiveness of German industry is currently not assured.** Even though we cannot reverse this trend through collective bargaining policy, we aim to develop supportive measures for employees and trainees that secure employment, promote resources for innovation and investment, and enhance location advantages through flexible regulations. Instruments like the Skilled Worker Radar (Fachkräfteradar), Career Compass (Berufskompass), and flexible working time arrangements are examples of such innovative tools created by collective bargaining agreements. We call on employers to further develop these with us and to supplement them with new instruments.

In addition to the two key demands, we want to continue the process of modernizing collective agreements. In the 2024 bargaining round, we initiated a strategic process with employers to modernize collective agreements and agreed to adapt them to the changing world of work by 2030. This includes continuing the changes to the BETV (Bundesentgelttarifvertrag) begun in 2024 and further specifying the agreed 8-point plan.

Following the upcoming discussions in shop steward and member meetings and the resolutions passed by the regional bargaining commissions, the final demand resolution will be decided on by the Federal Bargaining Commission on **December 16, 2025**.

In January, the first regional bargaining rounds will take place in the collective bargaining districts, and on February 3, national negotiations with the employers will begin.

Stay informed!
Want to stay up to date on the bargaining round?
Download the IGBCE app and sign up!

APP JETZT HERUNTERLADEN

Get involved now!
Dear member,
In the coming weeks, **your** input is needed! Talk about the demands in your shop steward group and at your workplace — **share your opinion, your experience, and your perspective**. Help decide which recommendations go to the bargaining commissions.

The conditions for this bargaining round are more difficult than ever. **That's why your involvement matters now more than ever**. Only if **you get active, speak up, and commit yourself,** we can make a difference together and bring this bargaining round to a successful conclusion.

With best regards,

Oliver Heinrich
Member of the Executive Board