

NR.24

In focus: Taking Action Instead of Waiting

Topic

IGBCE Members Enforce Their AT Rights

In 2022, the Higher Labour Court of Rhineland-Palatinate issued a landmark ruling (2 Sa 114/21, 27 January 2022) that finally brought greater clarity to the minimum requirements for AT compensation in the chemical industry (you can read the details [here](#)). So, what happens now?

Some employers responded by tidying up their AT employment contracts and compensation systems. Others simply carried on as before: using vague wording, denying employees compensation entitlements, or treating them as AT employees one moment but not in the next. For employees, this creates considerable uncertainty. If you do not know which rules apply to you, it is much harder to enforce your rights. It is therefore no surprise that more employees are now taking action. Compensation, working time and employment status are, after all, fundamental terms and conditions of employment.

We spoke to two members who decided to take action. Both were earning less than the minimum compensation that AT employees in the chemical industry are required to receive.



Foto: @canvacreativestudio / Susanna Quadrius

One, an engineer, pursued his claim while still employed by the company; the other, an office professional, had already found a new employer. Both cases were settled, both received compensation payments, and both are satisfied with the outcome.

Want to learn more? Our in-depth article on [kaat.net](https://www.kaat.net) explains the details of both cases and why each situation needs to be assessed individually.



Tabea Bromberg
IGBCE, Abteilung
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Editorial: From Rights to Reality

A landmark ruling – and nothing changes? How is that possible? Many employers have learned from experience that their AT practices are rarely challenged. That is why real change requires more than a single court ruling.

The IGBCE is therefore taking action on several levels: supporting members in enforcing their claims, equipping works councils to monitor and implement collectively agreed provisions, and at the same time working on collective bargaining solutions. In several working groups, the IGBCE and the German Chemical Employers' Association (BAVC) are currently preparing the further development of the chemical industry collective agreements through to 2030. Real change takes time. But every successfully enforced claim and every step forward in collective bargaining helps move things in the right direction. And, of course, every new member counts. Talk to your (AT) colleagues about joining IGBCE. The more members we have, the stronger our position becomes, not least at the bargaining table.



Sebastian Gödecke
IGBCE, Abteilung
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39 Degrees Heat and 100 % Commitment

Despite record-breaking midsummer temperatures, around 90 participants made their way to IGBCE's 6th KAAT Dialogue at the Adolf Schmidt Conference Center in Haltern am See. Even in 39°C heat, the event was a resounding success, marked by a positive spirit and plenty of energy.

The workshops covered a wide range of current issues, from the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence in commercial and administrative work to effective approaches for shaping workplace communication and visibility. Participants also discussed employment law topics such as termination agreements and the EU Pay Transparency Directive and explored strategies to strengthen both individual resilience and collective resources.

The strong team spirit was equally evident in the way participants dealt with the heat. Armed with creative cooling measures such as a lawn sprinkler and ice-cold washcloths, they supported one another and managed to keep their cool. Above all, the event demonstrated just how passionate everyone is about their topics and about exchanging experiences and ideas. As one participant jokingly remarked: "All that sweating together really bonded us."



Foto: Nadine Cardenão

Save the Date

7. KAAT Dialogue on Tour – Next Stop: Kassel-Baunatal

On 18 and 19 June 2027, the KAAT Dialogue will once again bring together commercial, academic and non-collectively bargained employees, as well as works council members, union representatives and other active colleagues committed to representing the interests of KAAT employees.

The focus will be on personal exchange, current challenges from day-to-day workplace practice, and exploring new perspectives together. Two days to connect, share experiences and gain fresh ideas and inspiration for work within the KAAT community.

So make sure to save the date now!

Further information on the programme, venue and registration will be available in spring 2027.

Is My Non-Tariff (ausser tarifflich, AT) Salary High Enough? Minimum Requirements for AT Employees in the Chemical Industry

Four times a year, we take a closer look at questions surrounding AT status and compensation in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries. This is the final session of 2026. **New: These seminars are now also open to non-IGBCE members**, so feel free to spread the word among colleagues who may be interested. Following the webinar, IGBCE members will have exclusive access to consultation sessions for more personalized advice. The webinar will take place on 13 November 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Between Laptop and Suitcase: Your Guide to Business Travel

Whether you're an occasional business traveler or frequently on the move, work-related travel comes with plenty of practical questions. What counts as working time, and what is considered personal time? How should travel time be compensated? And what kind of insurance protection applies during a business trip? The webinar will take place on 25 November 2026, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Employment Law for Field Sales and Service Employees

Field-based roles (Außendienst) come with a unique set of employment law questions, ranging from working hours and pay to overtime compensation. This webinar provides a practical overview of the most important regulations as well as recent developments in case law. The webinar will take place on 3 December 2026, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Digital: Your Labour Rights: What International Professionals Need to Know

Once again, we are pleased to offer a webinar series dedicated to “Working in Germany.” Over the course of three online sessions, international professionals from IGBCE sectors will learn about key aspects of German employment law and the social security system. We encourage you to spread the word among your international colleagues. (The webinars are open to non-members!)

[Register here](#)

Service: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Training and Examinations

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an increasingly important part of our working lives. As a result, it should also play a key role in vocational training. IGBCE's National Conference for Vocational Training and Examination Professionals explores the potential applications of AI from both a scientific perspective and through practical, real-world examples. Participants will discuss experiences from training and examination practice, examine both opportunities and challenges, and learn about successful use cases.

IGBCE's National Conference for Vocational Training and Examination Professionals will take place on 27-28 November 2026 in Bad Mündel.

[Register here](#)

Day of Action for the Welfare State on 26 September 2026

German industry is facing major challenges. At the same time, current reform initiatives by the federal government are focusing primarily on reducing workers' rights and social protection. Under the slogan **"Hard-earned! Your work. Your health. Your pension."**, the trade unions of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) are therefore campaigning for a balanced reform agenda that strengthens both economic competitiveness and social cohesion.

On **26 September 2026**, trade union members and supporters will rally in 15 major German cities to stand up for a forward-looking economic and social agenda. We are calling for increased investment in innovation, modern and reliable infrastructure, and policies that enhance economic resilience while reducing strategic dependencies on international markets.



Foto: brinkertlück

The more people join the movement, the stronger our message will be. So be part of it and encourage your family, friends, colleagues, and others to join as well. Everyone is welcome, regardless of union membership.

The commitment does not end with the Day of Action. The **IGBCE campaign "Put Your Finger on the Economy's Wound"** (i.e. **"Adressing the Economy's Pain Points"**) provides further opportunities to show your support. You can get involved online by signing the petition and contributing to the social wall.

[DGB information page](#)

[DGB Myth Check](#)

[IGBCE campaign page](#)



Impressum IGBCE

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