

2008-03-10

Dear colleagues

This years collective bargaining in Norway is expected to be one of the most interesting in years. Negotiations started yesterday, and are conducted by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) on behalf of all affiliated organisations, including Fellesforbundet and all our sectors. The reason for the central bargaining round is the main demand which is a continuation of our early retirement system. This system where a member of LO can retire at 62 was guaranteed for 10 years in 1997 by the then labour government, but because Parliament has negotiated a new retirement scheme all together, our early retirement system is no longer in line with the political system. The challenge is to negotiate a system which takes care of those who need early retirement within an acceptable political framework. The central negotiations will also set the general framework for branch negotiations, which are to run parallel to the central negotiations.

Demands besides early retirement (mainly for branch negotiations):

General wage increase, especially for low wage professions

Economic situation for apprentices

Special wage increase for the offshore sector in Fellesforbundet

Specific adjustments in the different collective branch agreements

All agreements run out 1 April and mediation, which will most probably be necessary, will commence after Easter. We will have a tight race this year, and time will show whether we have to go to strike to reach an acceptable solution. As always we negotiate to avoid this, but we will keep you posted as the deadline gets closer.

Best regards

Fellesforbundet

Atle Høie