



Germany faces fresh rail strike as labor dispute escalates

By: Laura Malsch | Jan 22 2024 at 09:08 AM | [Intermodal](#)

Rail passengers in Germany face more upheaval this week after the main train drivers union called on members to walk off the job a fourth time as a dispute over pay and working hours escalated.

The Gewerkschaft Deutscher Lokomotivführer rejected a third offer from rail operator Deutsche Bahn AG, according to a statement on Monday, urging freight train drivers to strike from 6 p.m. local time on Jan. 23. It asked passenger train drivers to strike from 2 a.m. on Wednesday until 6 p.m. on Jan. 29.

“Deutsche Bahn has once again shown that it is continuing to pursue its previous course of refusal and confrontation undaunted — there is no sign of any willingness to reach an agreement,” GDL said.

Deutsche Bahn submitted a third offer to the union on Friday, proposing a salary increase of up to 13% and the option to reduce work weeks to 37 hours from 2026 onwards.

The union is acting “absolutely irresponsibly” in rejecting the proposal, Deutsche Bahn said on Monday. Deutsche Bahn “is focusing on compromises, while the GDL is escalating the conflict excessively,” it said in an emailed statement.

It’s the second large-scale strike by train drivers this year in a bid to negotiate higher wages and shorter working hours. A three-day walkout earlier this month caused major nationwide disruptions in passenger and cargo rail traffic.