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## **EVG and ver.di: National Express Deutschland not prepared to work together with trade unions**

The German unions EVG and Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft (ver.di) sent a letter as long ago as November last year to the management of National Express Deutschland GmbH asking for constructive co-operation. As part of this, the unions asked for an undertaking that the sector collective wage agreement for regional and local public transport and the representative collective agreement for urban (road) transport would be respected.

The unions wish to emphasise that to date, no reaction to the letter has been forthcoming from National Express. In the interim, the company has won two invitations to tender for regional and local public transport in the region of North Rhine-Westphalia alone and is already making intensive preparations to break into the market of passenger transport by road.

“The respecting of the sector collective agreement for regional and local public transport on the part of National Express is in our view essential”, says Deputy Chair of the EVG, **Regina Rusch-Ziemba**. “The prospective entry of the company into long-distance coach services or urban transport is something we view with great concern if it is not clear that the collective agreements will be respected”, as ver.di National Executive Member **Christine Behle** emphasises.

The multinational is well-known for its aggressive stance towards trade unions in other countries, according to **Stefan Heimlich**, Chair of the Urban Transport Committee of the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF). “We know about the Group and its union-hostile activities and intimidation of employees, such as in the USA, in Spain and Great Britain.”

In Germany, autonomy in collective agreements and the social partnership are highly prized by the unions, and are particularly respected in the public transport sector. “There is no room here for unfair working conditions and wage-dumping”, says **Karl-Heinz Zimmermann** of mobifair e.V.

EVG and ver.di will be approaching the employees, setting up works councils with them, and demanding that the collective agreements be respected. This is why laws are passed that support these agreements. Both unions will be informing the authorities responsible for placing the orders of the situation regarding the company. The unions will not tolerate activities hostile to them, or the intimidation of the personnel.

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