



**BWI**  
Building and Wood  
Workers' International

## IKEA unions in Poland raise wages, double membership



BWI's "Caravan of IKEA Workers' Stories" went back to visit two Inter-IKEA factories in Poland where more than 5,000 workers, together with their unions, won big victories in their campaigns for fair wages.

The two factories, which are located in Zbaszynek and Lubawa respectively, produce furniture for IKEA. At both factories, trade unions have a heavy presence that caused for a successful push for wage increases to respond to additional workload and increasing prices of basic commodities. IKEA workers said that it is only fair for them to ask for additional remuneration as their workload has been increasing dramatically in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis.

In an interview, Dariusz Kawka of Solidarnosc in the Lubawa factory explained that at the end of 2020 the situation at their workplace became challenging as the company **questioned the number of members of their** union. He said that their union responded by bringing the issue to the labour court, together with their demand for fair wages. The court reportedly favored the union which agreed to a 35 percent wage increase. Kawka said that the victory ironically doubled their union's membership, something which the company is opposing in the first place.

Meanwhile in Zbaszynek, Solidarnosc leader Michal Kukula and Piotr Brambor of Budowlani said that they launched a similar campaign for fair wages, drawing inspiration largely from their fellow workers in Lubawa.

The trade unionists said that the campaign paid off. Mid-March of this year, salaries at the Zbaszynek plant was put at the same level as Lubawa's.

The trade union leaders said that it is crucial for workers to raise their voices to demand and win better terms for workers. They said that as more workers join unions, it increases chances for them to secure a better future.

The "IKEA Workers' Caravan of Stories" is a BWI campaign that aims to provide IKEA workers from different countries a platform to share with one another their working lives and experiences.

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