

What is the GDS?

A clever brain grasps it quickly – together much more is to be gained. That's why you, too, will want to be a member in the trade union for service personnel.

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The brains, drivers and doers of the GDS



Steffen Beckmann
Chairman of the Board



Helmut Krüger
Deputy Chairman



Lilia Hartfelder
Deputy Chairwoman



Gisela Hägemann
Support secretary



Stephan Hofmann
Legal adviser

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What is the GDS?

The Trade Union for Service Personnel (Gewerkschaft der Servicekräfte or GDS) is a union that was founded as a result of a jurisdiction dispute between two DGB unions. The GDS charter sets out its mission: to represent public service employees in companies, enterprises and institutions, or those working in hospital services. This includes enterprises that provide nursing care or other health facilities.

Everything about the GDS on our website!



What is the rational

The UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH in Lübeck and Kiel was established on 1st January 2005. Since its foundation the workforce has been paid in accordance with the General Contractual Regulations one-sidedly promulgated by the employer.

This remuneration was too little for the thoroughly hard work performed. For this reason the workforce demanded an improvement in the system of pay and a betterment of working conditions.

In 2006, when the workers' councils in Lübeck and Kiel were elected, they turned to the ver.di trade union, which was the union responsible for the UK S-H staff, and asked it to negotiate a collective wage agreement for the employees of the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH. At the beginning of 2008 the ver.di union repeatedly stated that they were negotiating a wage agreement both for the UK-SH subsidiaries and for the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH.

It was only at this point in time, early 2008, that the ver.di union had to confess that it had lied to the employees for years, admitting that in fact it had not negotiated a wage agreement for the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH. A disgrace and scandal second to

none.

As a result the staff and workers' councils turned to the IG BAU union with the request to open negotiations with the employer on a wage agreement for UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH staff.

After many employees had joined IG BAU the rate of unionisation went up to around 60%. With the strengths and power of these members IG BAU was able to successfully negotiate a collective wage agreement in 2008, which came into effect on 1st January 2009. On the wage agreement coming into force the ver.di union demanded that the management of the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH immediately annul the wage agreement since the ver.di union was supposedly the only union responsible for tariff policies relating to UK-SH and its subsidiaries. The employer, however, did not comply with this demand since it was of the opinion that IG BAU was the union legally entitled to handle tariff policies in the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH. As a result the ver.di union appealed to the DGB court of arbitration to clarify the position regarding tariff policies. The first hearing of the DGB arbitration court took place in April 2009.

In this DGB court of arbitration

le behind the GDS?

hearing the wishes of the employees, most of whom were IG BAU members, were neither scrutinised nor even taken into account. This DGB arbitration court hearing was intended to be exclusively a demonstration of power on the part of the ver.di union. It is otherwise impossible to explain why the ver.di DGB union would wish to dismantle the DGB affiliated union in this way. The tasks and aims that should be those of a union were completely ignored, namely to campaign as a matter of urgency for the concerns and rights of the employees and union members against the employer and, in addition, to negotiate collective wage agreements. The result was an arrangement for both unions which even IG BAU members might possibly have been able to live with. But the ver.di union was unwilling to accept this arrangement.

On 05.07.2010 a second DGB arbitration court sitting instigated by the ver.di union took place, concluding with a judgement. The judgement of the DGB hearing stated that the ver.di union was the sole body responsible for policies relating to organisation and tariffs that was recognised within the DGB for the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH. The IG BAU union was to relinquish its position as the representative

body in this company. A decision was simply taken over the heads of the workforce without responding to their needs.

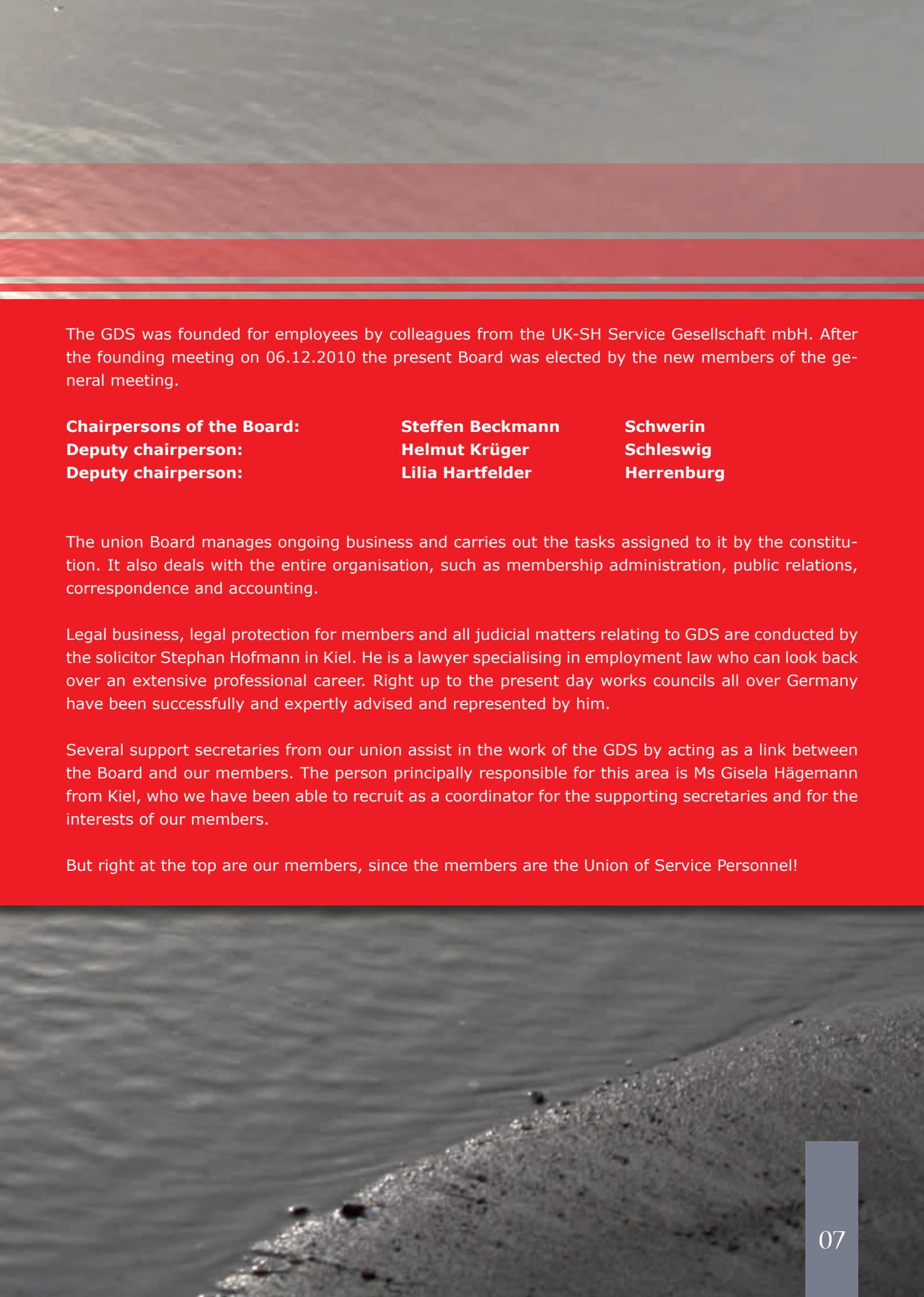
The remaining unions of ver.di and komba immediately put out leaflets disputing how the cake – that is, the membership of IG BAU – was to be divided up. Bizarrely, ver.di attempted to get this dispute decided for itself by offering IG BAU members wrist-watches, wallets and colour TVs! In doing so they did not take into account the fact that the workers are mature citizens and that decisions that affect them can only be taken by themselves.

One of the mature decisions of 24 employees was taken on 06.12.2010, namely to found their own union in accordance with Article 9, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution, so that they could exercise effective pressure and counter-pressure to prompt their social opponent (the employer) into entering into negotiations on the conclusion of a tariff regulation on working conditions and the conclusion of a new wage agreement.

Who's behind the GDS?

You can find more
on the drivers
behind the GDS on
the internet.
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The GDS was founded for employees by colleagues from the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH. After the founding meeting on 06.12.2010 the present Board was elected by the new members of the general meeting.

Chairpersons of the Board:

Steffen Beckmann

Schwerin

Deputy chairperson:

Helmut Krüger

Schleswig

Deputy chairperson:

Lilia Hartfelder

Herrenburg

The union Board manages ongoing business and carries out the tasks assigned to it by the constitution. It also deals with the entire organisation, such as membership administration, public relations, correspondence and accounting.

Legal business, legal protection for members and all judicial matters relating to GDS are conducted by the solicitor Stephan Hofmann in Kiel. He is a lawyer specialising in employment law who can look back over an extensive professional career. Right up to the present day works councils all over Germany have been successfully and expertly advised and represented by him.

Several support secretaries from our union assist in the work of the GDS by acting as a link between the Board and our members. The person principally responsible for this area is Ms Gisela Hägemann from Kiel, who we have been able to recruit as a coordinator for the supporting secretaries and for the interests of our members.

But right at the top are our members, since the members are the Union of Service Personnel!

Unions come, unions go – but the GDS in the rain.



What is the GDS?

Since its foundation the GDS has always aimed to campaign unceasingly for all the interests of its members. The GDS is principally concerned to prevent cuts in social services, as well as to protect vested rights, to achieve fair pay, and ensure a future for our members. We shall continue to fight unremittingly for our aims with the power of all our members behind us!

1. The principle task of the GDS is to negotiate collective wage agreements and to represent our members in matters relating to employment law.
2. The GDS is committed to the basic democratic and social principles in state, economy and society. The defence of these principles includes the recognition of the right to resist enshrined in Article 20, Paragraph 4 of the constitution.
3. Our union is independent of employers, governments, political parties, administrations and creeds. It is a spokesperson for all workers, including those in the GDS organisation who have retired from working life, regardless of their national identity and origin.
4. The GDS represents the economic, social, professional and cultural interests of all our members, bringing them together in united action. It campaigns for the realisation of gender democracy and the equal rights of women and men in the workplace, in economy, society and politics. On both a national and international level its task is to improve living and working conditions, including the protection of employment and health, by concluding wage agreements and influencing for the better politics, the economy and society, as well as campaigning for full employment, enduring environmentally compatible trade, equal opportunities for all and democratisation in politics, in the economy and in society. The GDS fights to combat cuts in social services.
5. The GDS supports a comprehensive right to strike in compliance with Article 6, Paragraph 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Social Charter, and the International Labour Organisation (ISO) Convention 87 and Convention 98 on Freedom of Association and the Right to Negotiate.

S won't leave you standing

Beitrittserklärung

Rot markiert - Pflichtfelder - Bitte unbedingt ausfüllen, damit wir den Beitritt zügig bearbeiten können.



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Become a member of the GDS TODAY!

Mit der Unterschrift erkenne ich die Satzung der Gewerkschaft der Servicekräfte (GDS) an. Gleichzeitig ermächtige ich die GDS bis auf Widerruf die von mir zu entrichtenden satzungsgemäßen Beiträge monatlich zu lasten meines Kontos mittels Lastschrift einzuziehen.

Die Daten werden nach den Vorschriften des Bundesdatenschutzgesetzes gespeichert.

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Adresse:

Gewerkschaft der Servicekräfte (GDS)
Hansaring 3 c
24145 Kiel

Fax:
0431 71 74 857



What has the GDS achieved up to now?

Since its foundation the GDS has experienced a dramatic increase in membership. Until today the union in the UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH has been able to achieve a rate of unionisation of over 70%. In 2011 this opened up the historical chance to negotiate on the part of these employees an advantageous firm wage agreement after tough negotiating rounds. As a result of this company wage agreement, which was signed by the bargaining parties in September 2012, UK-SH Service Gesellschaft mbH employees in Lübeck und Kiel have been

able to get an average wage increase of 12% over 39 months, coupled with a performance bonus of 600 euro annually. It has moreover been possible to obtain for GDS members an additional holiday allowance of 1.85 of the standard hourly wage for each day of their holidays. As far as we are aware an equivalent holiday pay arrangement is only to be found anywhere in Germany in the GDS and IG BAU.

Our legal protection department, in successful and effective cooperation with the lawyer Stephan Hofmann, has in many cases succeeded in ensuring that our members have been able to keep their jobs by extending their employment contracts. In the case of other members we have been able to have

What targets has the GDS set itself now?

Because the jurisdiction disputes of the DGB unions have become transferred to other service enterprises the GDS intends to begin just here (in the framework of its overall organisation checklist, needless to say) in standing up as quickly as possible for these employees too. Because also these staff have a right to the best possible union support and the prevention of social service cuts, as well as wage agreements with fair wages, the protection of vested rights and a secure future. For one thing is a fact: if the DGB unions let their members down with all their jurisdiction disputes it's time to act and put an end to this ridiculous and shabby kerfuffle. With the power of its members behind it the GDS will roll up its sleeves!

Why should you become a member of the GDS?

The GDS is a free and independent trade union and is subject only to the aims and needs of its members, as well as to the decisions of the union conference. It is comparable to the GDL: (Locomotive Drivers Union), the Cockpit Association or the Marburg Federation of the German Fire Brigade Union. The GDS plan to breathe life into the ideas of the original unions by putting them into action. In the GDS the members are the union, because it is only they who are the specialists and initiates in their companies. For this reason it is enormously important to exploit these skills for the aims of the union and to involve them in any negotiations.

Unlike individual employment contracts, collective wage agreements can improve working conditions (getting more from a holiday, an equal wage for an equal job, and so on). So that a wage agreement may be negotiated and implemented in the company concerned the union must also implement collective action to put pressure on obstinate employers (by the use of token strikes for example). It is enormously important for just that reason that a large number of employees from the companies involved organise themselves in the GDS in order to exercise that pressure. What's more, as a GDS trade union member you can enjoy all the advantages of a mutually supportive group into the bargain. This means, for example, union legal protection and, in the event of a strike, a claim to strike pay. Our members are not represented by an anonymous Board set up in a large business building and squandering your membership contributions. The GDS Board is always there for its members. And always within hand's reach.

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