



NFU wants to retain employees' purchasing power

The NFU and the unions are in talks about the wage increase in 2023 for all employees of the umcs. Yesterday, November 9, they discussed the basis for agreeing a responsible wage increase. For the NFU, retaining purchasing power is an important principle. The discussion will continue in the near future.

Neither the NFU nor the unions dispute that wages must increase. The issue under discussion is what is a realistic and suitable wage increase in these turbulent times. "In the past ten years, the umcs have always been successful in maintaining the purchasing power of their employees in their collective labour agreement (cao). And we want to do that again for 2023. That is exactly what the current talks with the unions are focusing on," said Karen Kruijthof, negotiator on behalf of the NFU. The energy prices are escalating and contributing to high inflation. This affects all citizens and organisations, including the umcs, but unlike for example shops, the umcs cannot pass on the rising costs automatically by raising prices or fees. That forms a serious hindrance.

The NFU is therefore proposing a wage increase that takes into account the government's compensation, such as the cap on energy costs. "In this way we can jointly ensure that our employees can continue to support themselves as far as possible," stated Gabriël Zwart, another negotiator on behalf of the NFU. "In the meantime, we are critically examining savings on all costs, investments and other expenses. Our capital is finite, even umcs can only spend money once."

Half a billion shortfall

The unions' wishes will result in financial difficulties for the umcs [see [ABN AMRO study](#)]. That could have radical consequences, like personnel cuts and being able to provide less care. Employees and patients would suffer as a result. In a future discussion round, the NFU and the unions will cover the extent to which the demands and possibilities can be brought closer together, so the umcs' employees will quickly know where they stand.

About the NFU and the cao

The Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU) is the advocacy organisation of the seven university medical centres in the Netherlands. On behalf of the umcs, the NFU negotiates with the unions about a collective labour agreement for the roughly 80,000 employees. The current cao expires on 1 January 2024. The current talks fall within the current cao and concern the wage increase for 2023.