CLAUS WESELSKY



Federal Chairman of Honour of GDL
Head of German train driver's union GDL (2008-2024)

Claus Weselsky is probably the best-known trade unionist in Germany. For 16 years, he headed the train drivers' union GDL and often stood up for the interests of train drivers in a media-effective and quite contentious manner. In numerous collective wage negotiations he proved to be an uncompromising advocate of the GDL's interests.

Weselsky (*1959) completed polytechnic secondary school in Dresden and trained as a diesel engine mechanic. He then trained as a rail vehicle mechanic at Deutsche Reichsbahn before training as an engine driver for diesel and electric locomotives. At Deutsche Reichsbahn, he worked as an engine driver on shunting locomotives, goods trains and later also on passenger and express trains.

In May 1990, Claus Weselsky joined the German Train Drivers' Union (GDL), which was re-established at the beginning of 1990. He initially worked at Deutsche Reichsbahn as a coordinator and as a member of the staff council and works council. He drove his last train in 1992, followed by a career as a trade union official. Initially, he was a member of the works council at Regionalverkehr Dresden and from 2002 to 2006 he worked in the GDL's collective wage agreement department. He was then deputy chairman until 2008 and has been chairman of the GDL since 6 May 2008. In 2012, he was re-elected chairman of the GDL with 90 per cent of the vote.

In 2010, he was also elected Vice President of the Autonomous Locomotive Drivers' Unions of Europe (ALE) and since 2012 he has been Deputy Federal Chairman of the umbrella organisation DBB Beamtenbund und Tarifunion. As an employee representative, Claus Weselsky was a member of the Supervisory Board of DB Regio AG from 2006 to 2015.

After 16 years as GDL Chairman, he no longer stood as a candidate at the General Assembly on 3 September 2024 and retired.