



Unions at ILO: Securing decent work in arts & entertainment

ILO meeting lays foundation for better arts & entertainment jobs globally

Geneva, 23 February 2023 After a week of negotiations at the International Labour Organization (ILO), unions, employers and governments have agreed to a set of conclusions that recognize and seek to **redress the long hours, low pay, lack of social protection and inequalities** that are creating **'decent work deficits'** in the arts and entertainment industries.

The outcomes, issued in a document today, follow a five-day ILO technical meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from 13 to 17 February on the future of work in arts and entertainment sector. The meeting brought together union leaders representing more than **1,000,000 workers** in the industries under the umbrella of three global union federations: UNI Global Union, the International Federation of Actors (FIA) and the International Federation of Musicians (FIM).

Going forward, governments, in cooperation with employers' and unions, should promote and strengthen laws and regulations that **limit working time**; provide universal access to **comprehensive social protections** systems to **all workers** in the sector, including **self-employed workers**; and afford **public funding** to close the skills shortages in the sector.

The conclusions also recognize that **collective bargaining is key to achieving decent work** and they include action points for governments to ensure effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining in the arts and entertainment industries, and for the ILO to provide policy guidance on its implementation in the sector.

Philippa Childs, Head of Bectu (UK) which represents workers in broadcasting, media and entertainment, also Vice President of UNI Global Union's Media Entertainment & Arts sector (UNI MEI), said:

"We've made a lot of progress, and these conclusions will enable us to put pressure on employers and governments around the key items on our agenda, particularly the issue of long hours in our industries. The pandemic gave workers a chance to reflect, and really think about the impact of long and unsustainable hours on their work-life balance. Many have left the industry and it's uncertain they will return, leading to the skills shortage that we have in the UK and globally. We need to improve working conditions and opportunities if we are to turn this situation around."

As online streaming renders traditional licencing models out-of-date, the conclusions emphasize the importance of **copyright and related rights** in the arts and entertainment sector and require governments to ensure that these rights are implemented in a way that effectively remunerates producers, performers and authors through statutory remuneration and collective bargaining.

The ILO conclusions also call for a **human-centred approach** to the introduction of **new technologies and artificial intelligence**, which impact workers across the industry.

Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, National Executive Director & Chief Negotiator, SAG-AFTRA (US) and member of the FIA Executive Committee, who was the spokesperson for the workers' group, said:

"Artificial intelligence offers extraordinary possibilities but poses real threats. A human-centered approach to AI is crucial to the future of our industry. These transformative technologies must complement human creativity, not seek to replace it. Now is the time for the ILO to help take on this issue and further a framework that ensures fairness and sustainability, as part of the broader agenda to advance decent work and access to collective bargaining for all workers."

Governments should address the challenges in cross-border mobility of workers, including barriers to visas and work permits, as well as the cross-border portability of social security entitlements and dual taxation.

Benoît Machuel, General Secretary of FIM, said:

“We can be particularly pleased that the conclusions adopted answer our core concerns by recommending the recognition of the right to collective bargaining and a universal access to social protection for all workers. The provisions on cross-border mobility and occupational diseases are also very positive for the professionals we represent.”

Among other provisions, the conclusions call for all parties to ensure strong labour inspection systems to advance a safe and healthy working environment, including effectively **addressing violence and harassment at work**. Furthermore, the outcomes highlight the importance of public and private investments to enable a just transition to a greener industry that is also undergoing radical technological change.

Dominick Luquer, General Secretary of FIA, said:

“Our discussions over the past week in the ILO were very detailed and wide ranging, something that was possible due to the large and highly expert global delegation of members who joined us in Geneva. In particular, we welcome the recognition of the need to approach all work for the future of the sector through the diversity and inclusion lens. We hope that this may lead the way for future progress on our sector, but also in other sectors as they approach these discussions.”

The document acknowledges inequalities in the sector particularly with respect to people vulnerable to discrimination and calls for the sector to approach all aspects of its work **“through a lens of diversity, equality and inclusion.”**

Further comment from:

Sonia Santana, President, SINDCINE, Brazil - UNI MEI Vice President:

“The outcomes go a long way in ensuring access to collective agreements, and they also give us other tools to defend workers' rights - particularly to push for equality of women, racial equality and for equality of indigenous people - and deepen relationships with employers.”

John Lewis, International Vice President, IATSE, Canada - Member of UNI MEI Committee:

“This is a positive result. What this does is create a starting point to launch other discussions with nation governments to improve access to collective bargaining, to enhance copyright protection and to address long working hours, which impacts everybody across the globe working in this industry.”

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The International Federation of Actors (FIA) is a global federation of performers' trade unions, guilds and professional associations. Founded in 1952, it represents several hundreds of thousands of performers with some 90 member organisations in more than 60 countries around the world. <https://fia-actors.com/>

The International Federation of Musicians (FIM), founded in 1948, is the international organisation for musicians' unions and equivalent representative organisations. It is now counting about 70 members in 60 countries throughout the world. <https://www.fim-musicians.org/>

UNI Media, Entertainment & Arts unites unions and guilds around the world to raise standards and enforce rights for creatives, technicians and auxiliary workers. <https://uniglobalunion.org/about/sectors/media-entertainment/>