

**PUBLIC HEARING  
IN THE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS OF UKRAINE  
«DECENT WORK AS A BASIS FOR DECENT LIFE»**

**RESOLUTION**

Participants in the public hearing “Decent Work as a Basis for Decent Life” – representatives of state authorities, trade unions and employers’ organisations, academicians – with deep concern note that in the period of economic instability, global financial, energy and ecological crises, increasing food prices throughout the world the issue of provision of decent work and securing workers’ decent life becomes especially sharp, and, therefore, needs constant attention and interaction between the State and civil society.

The time has come to review the fundamentals of globalization processes at the international and national levels. Changes should be directed at bringing back justice and equality to the heart of public policy in order to make the globalization work for the benefit of all citizens, not only privileged categories. In fact, the main load of negative consequences lies on shoulders of workers and their families, representatives of small enterprises.

Many companies in Ukraine, first of all in hi-tech industries, are already in the situation when their demand for labour cannot be satisfied because of the lack of skilled workers. At the same time more than 40% of almost 2 million vacancies submitted by the employers to the State Employment Agency offer wages lower than subsistence level or have dangerous working conditions. The system of vocational education and training of workers being collapsed, workers are re-trained only once per 12 years, when the graduate of the vocational school need to work at least 7 years in order to acquire high skills.

Last years the number of those working under conditions that do not meet sanitary and hygienic requirements has been increasing, and in some key spheres of economic activities it reached almost 27 percent of the total workforce.

As a result of worsened working conditions and unsatisfactory provision of workers with means of individual and collective protection over 7 thousand cases of occupational diseases are identified annually.

Situation with traumatism at workplaces also causes concerns. In manufacture up to 20 thousand persons get work-related injuries per year, of them over 1 thousand die, although over 30 thousand persons seek medical care related to such traumas. It means that significant number of workplace accidents is hidden from investigation and registration.

Decent work requires respect for the labour, social and economic rights of workers, the right to organize, elimination of discrimination of youth and women. Carrying out public control trade unions every year identify thousands cases when these rights are violated.



Distribution of income between employers and workers remains rather unfair. The share of wages in the GDP of Ukraine is less than 50%, (while in developed countries this indicator makes up 60-70%), what constrains development of hi-tech and science-intensive enterprises. In Ukraine still exist a shameful phenomenon of “economic poverty” when 28,4 % or almost 5 million families live below poverty line, which according to latest data is 704 Hryvnas per month.

Low official wages and widely used practice of “shadow” wages results in low level of payments in social insurance schemes, low-quality medical care, ineffective system of social protection.

Underrated wages are one of the reasons of extremely low pensions for labour veterans. The ratio of the average pension to the average wages in Ukraine is only 49 per cent, while in developed countries this figure is much higher (almost 60 per cent)/

In this situation the real subsistence level as a basic state social guarantee is concealed from Ukrainian society. Contrary to the Article 5 of the Law of Ukraine on Subsistence Level, the Government has never published in 2008 the calculations of the monthly subsistence level and failed to provide it to the social partners.

The situation is exacerbated by still unsolved problem of wage debts - 159.2 thousand employees of economically active enterprises have wage arrears of 304.2 million grivnas.

The Decent Work concept was introduced by the ILO in 1999. It reflects general aims that should be pursued by governments, employers and workers’ organizations of all countries, members of the ILO. In modern difficult conditions the realization of the concept can play paramount role in securing balance and stability in the society and finding answers to challenges of nowadays.

In June 2008, the Memorandum of Understanding between the ILO, Ukrainian Government, employers and trade unions on decent work country program for 2008-2011 was signed.

Realisation of the decent work concept in Ukraine should become a basis for consolidation of the state and civil society. The Government, together with employers’ organisations and trade unions must urgently develop and bring for public discussion such a program of the national socio-economic development that would favour reaching full productive employment, introducing increased wages and improved social standards in Ukraine matching the European ones.

This program should urge business to create workplaces where human and workers rights are fully observed. Workplaces, that are safe for workers’ health. Workplaces, that provide for acceptable wages and proper level of social protection of workers and their families. Workplaces, where problems and conflicts are solved through dialogue and agreement, not by repressions or compulsion.

Participants in the hearing propose the newspaper “Trade Unions News” and magazine “Employer” to initiate together with state and other mass media a project of informational support of the realisation of decent work policy in Ukraine.

Ukrainian trade union organisations – ITUC affiliates show their solidarity with trade unions all over the world in their fair struggle for decent work for all workers and confirm their obligations before the international trade union movement.