

## EFJ Annual Meeting (AM)

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**Bucharest, Romania,  
18-19 May 2017**

### **Resolutions adopted by AM**

#### **A. On union rights, public service media, support for journalism; authors' rights, gender...**

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##### **1. On Atypical Workers (*Freelance Expert Group*)**

*Proposed by the NUJ UK & Ireland*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18-19, 2017,

Condemns the erosion of employment rights across Europe and globally.

All workers deserve to be treated equally, regardless of employment status. Freelance workers frequently experience isolation, exploitation and discrimination; are forced to accept unfair terms and conditions of engagement and are deprived of the social protections afforded to workers employed on contracts of service.

All workers, including those who freely operate as freelances, are entitled to be treated in accordance with the principles of the ILO charter, including Convention No. 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise.

The increasing trend towards forcing workers to accept self-employed contracts is designed to deprive so called atypical workers of the social protections afforded to employees.

The sharp increase in workers engaged on a freelance basis presents significant organisational challenges to trade unions at national, European and international level.

**Calls on** the Steering Committee of the EFJ to work with the European Industry Federations and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) on the **European Pillar on Social Rights**, and within the IFJ to help with our effort with Global Union Federation (GUF) and International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to lay the foundation for an effective campaign for an ILO convention on atypical workers.

## 2. **On precarious workers in Portugal** (*Freelance Expert Group*) *Proposed by the Portuguese Journalists' Union*

As some of you may know, the Union of Journalists in Portugal, Sofia Branco, represents, along with two other Journalists' associations, organized a congress, January this year, which did not happen since 1998.

In that congress, there was only one motion approved by unanimous decision - and that was the rejection of the living and working conditions of hundreds of precarious workers - meaning not only those with no permanent contract, but also those with low wages - in both public and private sectors.

The journalists in that situation working for RTP - the radio and television public station - made a public claiming for their rights in the congress. Following that, our labour inspectors paid several visits to dozens of newsrooms, public and private owned, and confirmed precarious work is disseminated everywhere. More important, they announced to have registered more than 400 false freelancers.

Of those, 200 workers with service agreements in RTP, company owned by the State, play, in fact, the role of permanent employees, but not with the same rights nor safety.

After the congress, two dozens of workers claimed to be in the same situation in LUSA, the only news agency in the country, mainly owned by the State.

We are now expecting the Portuguese Government to act on the figures made public by Labour officials.

Therefore, the EFJ supports on the claiming of the full integration and rights and safety recognition to those false freelancers, on behalf of a credible and transparent public service.

And the EFJ extend the support that support to similar situations in the private sector, forcing companies to report the number of workers in that same conditions and make them equally responsible.

### **3. On Europe- wide campaign for the improvement of fair pay and employment standards (*Labour Rights Expert Group*)**

*Proposed by the NUJ Ireland*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18-19, 2017,

Notes with concern the major problems facing the media industry across Europe.

Disinvestment in news gathering by media organisations, the failure by EU member states and the European Commission to tackle the issue of ownership concentration, combined with the rise of so called "clickbait" journalism, are contributing to the alarming undermining of public trust in the media.

Journalism is now a low pay profession, with staff and freelance workers suffering from sustained attacks on their income often while owners continue to enhance shareholder profits.

The growth of precarious contracts acts as a barrier to diversity and has profoundly poor implications for the terms and conditions of the employment of media workers.

Indeed the future of democracy in Europe is predicated on the existence of a truthful, strong, vibrant, and diverse media.

**Calls on** the Steering Committee to prioritise with urgency the development and implementation of a Europe- wide campaign for the improvement of fair pay and employment standards within the media industry, the campaign to include political lobbying, co-operation with colleague unions, federations and the ETUC.

### **4. On the Future of journalism (*Digital Expert Group and Broadcasting Expert Group*)**

*Proposed by NUJ (UK & Ireland)*

The European Federation of Journalists General Meeting in Bucharest on 18th and 19th May 2017,

Recognising that the crises of media has recently taken a sharp turn with the landscape shifting again as Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon have become the world's most powerful publishers. The *Facebookisation* of news has now put the future of journalism in the hands of a few social media engines that are imposing the most dramatic changes than at any time in the history of journalism;

Deploring newsrooms that continue to shrink with not only thousands of jobs haemorrhaging but skills, such as photography, disappearing overnight. While some media is making heavy losses, new entrants are making good money from advertisers – sites such as BuzzFeed, Vox and Vice – by offering free content funded by branded content and native advertising;

Concerned that beyond the knee-jerk reaction by most employers to their loss of economic model under the pressure of technological changes and expanding globalisation, journalists have also had to deal with increased attacks on their integrity and professionalism. As well as grappling for time immemorial with propaganda and manipulation, journalists are now confronting new emerging concepts of “post-truth”, “alternative facts” and “fake news,” and are in daily soul-searching regarding their status in the digital age.

Believes that journalists and their unions are entering uncharted territories and **instructs** the Steering Committee to:

1. Develop with affiliates new strategies starting from defending the historical assets that gave legacy media its public service role at the heart of the culture of modern media – ethics, expertise, knowhow and rich skills.
2. Reaffirm the implementation of motion 3 adopted at the Sarajevo 2016 AGM which called for the EFJ to work with the IFJ to equip affiliates with the task of unionising digital media and empowering journalists in the new media world.
3. Work with media organisations that have so far avoided becoming fake news factories earning their income from clicks and instead adopted innovative strategies making them digital-first and subscription-based organisations, while investing heavily in original quality journalism;
4. Support specific campaigns in countries where governments have shown signs that they will take responsibility for news and information and looking at ways to bolster journalism.

Believes that the fast moving digital environment is now global and affects the media landscape, public sphere, journalism industry and almost every single member union of the IFJ worldwide. It is therefore crucial that the EFJ works under the aegis of the IFJ as agreed in motion 22 passed unanimously by the Sarajevo annual meeting."

**5. European Directive for the preservation of the authors' rights of the journalists and the creators (Authors' Rights Expert Group)**

*Proposed by SNJ-CGT (France)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18-19, 2017,

Noting the actual revision of the European Union copyright directive,

Noting that in the context of globalization and media convergence at European and International level, this directive is essential to guarantee journalists' moral and patrimonial rights, as they are also authors,

Noting that these rights are, as for other creators, essential to guarantee freedom and quality of information,

**Calls** on the EFJ Steering Committee to make every effort with the concerned international federations to intervene with the Members of the European Parliament and the Commission in order to continue the dialogue between publishers and authors about the draft directive.

To highlight in this context:

- That publishers are not the owners of the works of the journalists;
- That the remuneration for authors has to be made on the basis of the principle of equality.

**6. On the defence of public service in Switzerland – against the initiative « No Billag » (Broadcasting Expert Group)**

*Proposed by syndicom and impressum (Switzerland)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18th, 2017,

Notes that many governments throughout Europe are attacking public service broadcasting by reducing funding and cutting licence fees leading to reduction in

quality broadcasting and the loss of hundreds of jobs among journalists and technicians.

The popular initiative “No Billag” was submitted on 11 December 2015 in Switzerland. It asks for the abolition of the licence fees allocated to the broadcasters of radio and television programme services currently holding a concession, as well as the abandonment of the other direct aids granted to the broadcasters. It means the complete abolition of public service in the media.

If the initiative is accepted, the Swiss media landscape would be impoverished and subject to a market-driven logic. It would no longer be possible to propose the same radio and television offers in all linguistic regions. Public service in the digital media would disappear. In addition, diversity of opinions and offers would be reduced. In these conditions, guaranteeing quality journalism would be extremely difficult.

The implementation of the initiative would also provoke the loss of several thousand jobs, in a particularly tight labour market in regard to media.

For all the above reasons, the EFJ support the demand from syndicom, impressum to be in solidarity and support the fight against the “No Billag” initiative and against the weakening of public service media, because it would reduce the journalistic offering and quality and would result in unemployment of thousands of workers.

### **7. For the introduction of direct support for the press and online media in Switzerland**

*Proposed by syndicom and impressum (Switzerland)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18-19, 2017,

The situation of the media in Switzerland, and particularly the print media, is alarming. Restructuring, closures or mergers of media have never been so high. The historical French-speaking Swiss news magazine "L'Hebdo" has disappeared, regional dailies like Tribune de Genève and 24 heures underwent a massive reduction of their editorial staff with many layoffs of journalists. The major print media groups Tamedia and Ringier are turning away from investment in information to prefer larger investments in digital means with advertising sites that produce large revenues without any benefit for the newspapers. This situation has repeatedly been denounced by the trade unions. Independent newspapers, on the other hand, remain fragile, struggling to increase their subscribers or to sell per unit, especially because of the idea of free content that has settled in the public.

Faced with these findings, media unions are calling the Confederation, the cantons and the communes to provide direct support for editorial projects whatever their infrastructure. Such direct help should encourage independent and ethical journalism by setting objective criteria such as compliance with working conditions guaranteed by a collective agreement. It is about defending the fundamental right of the public to the freedom of information which is a fundamental pillar of our democracy.

Requests the support and expertise of the EFJ to support future press support projects to be submitted to the Swiss political authorities in order to protect the independence of newspapers and ensure quality information in Switzerland.

#### **8. On reinforcing quality in regional news provided by major media outlets in Greece**

*Proposed by: Journalists' Union of Macedonia and Thrace Daily Newspapers (ESIEMTH)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18th, 2017,

Noting that almost all major daily newspapers of nationwide circulation published in the capital city of Greece, Athens, closed down their correspondence offices in all regional cities,

Noting that privately owned TV stations licensed to broadcast nationwide either have no offices at all outside Athens or hire extremely few journalists to cover their needs in terms of regional news,

Noting that the Greek Government is not taking all the necessary steps to secure that 19 regional radio stations will be officially and permanently included in the organisation chart of the Public Broadcaster, ERT.

Considering that this situation has significant impact not only in terms of working places lost, but also on the quality of information provided to the public by those media outlets, as the private ones are clearly unable to properly cover news nationwide, although this is an essential provision in their license, and the Public Broadcaster's ability to do so is under threat,

**Instructs** the Steering Committee:

To support the Greek Unions, in particular the regional ones, ESIEMTH, Journalists' Union of Thessaly, Central Greece, Euboea, Journalists' Union of Peloponnese, Epirus and Islands, in their efforts to include in the legislation ruling the licensing process of the aforementioned media terms that secure a minimum number of journalists working in regional offices, in order to make sure that the public has access to news nationwide in an adequate way.

- To ask the Greek government to ensure that all regional stations of ERT will go on broadcasting.

### **9. On ILO convention on violence against women**

*Proposed by the Russian Union of Journalists (RUJ), Moscow, Russia*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

- welcoming the work done by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to revise the Convention (CEDAW) first adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979;
- noting that CEDAW is one of the most highly ratified international human rights conventions, having the support of 188 States parties. The substance of the Convention is based on three interrelated core principles: equality, non-discrimination and State obligation;
- congratulating the IFJ Gender Council and the IFJ Secretariat for its involvement in the recent campaign by CEDAW to update its General Recommendation No. 19: "25 years of CEDAW General Recommendation No. 19 (1992): Accelerating efforts on gender based violence against women"

**urges** the EFJ Steering Committee to give support to the initiatives of the IFJ to lobby governments in support of an ILO convention on violence at work, with a focus on gender-based violence

## **B. On Media Freedom**

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### **10. On Media freedom and freedom of expression in Spain**

*Proposed by FesP (Spain)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

ALARMED by the actual risks for freedom of expression in Spain,

REMINDING that the repressive laws popularly known as “Gag Laws”, which has been implemented since the July 2015, has resulted into reducing the freedoms of information and expression for journalists especially, but for all citizens generally speaking,

CONSIDERING that the Law for the Protection of Citizens’ Security and the latest reforms of Penal Code (popularly called Gag Laws) have led to several condemnations of journalists to fines (over 600 euros each) for covering normal newsworthy facts, mainly when registering the behaviour of some policemen in streets demonstrations and in some home evictions,

NOTING that in other cases, such as the one of photographer Axier López (revue Argia), punished with 601 € only because of publishing the arrest of one person in Twitter, and noting that the Spanish Ombudswoman estimated later that that fine was unconstitutional,

NOTING the recent condemnation of student Cassandra Vera to one year in jail and 7 months of legal disqualification for some comments written in her personal Twitter account,

NOTING that Cassandra Vera was only expressing some sardonic comments about the killing in 1973 of Carrero Blanco (vice-president during the General Franco’s dictatorship),

NOTING the recent arrest of a whistleblower related to a corruption case similar to Panama Papers, who finally was not accused at all under any legal procedure,

NOTING the recent and surprising visit by police to Público after this digital newspaper’s published several investigations related to “state’s filthy affairs”

CONSIDERING that these and other similar cases break with international treaties over freedom and expression that Spain has endorsed and signed,

CONSIDERING the ambiguous and vague terms the mentioned Gag Laws use such as “*non-authorized use of pictures*”, “*unrespect for police agent*” or “*negative to be identified*”, are leading to an increase of legal procedures against journalists,

NOTING that police reports are weighed as evidence enough to impose those fines to journalists,

CONSIDERING that in Spain the Platform for the Defense of Free Expression (PDLI) and FESP (Federation of Journalists Unions) estimate together that the penalised journalists and citizens are defenseless because the Administration become judge and jury in those situations,

**Reminds** the Spanish government (now without clear parliamentary majority) that the fight against terrorism cannot serve as excuse to violate freedom of expression and information; neither the debate about some irresponsible use of social networks.

**Calls** the Spanish Parliament to review and reform the mentioned laws and put them in line with European Union legislation related to freedom of the press and freedom of expression and Council of Europe standards...

### **11. On unjustified legal threats including defamation law in Italy and throughout Europe**

*Proposed by the FNSI (Italy)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

expresses concern for the numerous attempts to silence press and journalists, in different ways within Europe.

Referring to the phenomenon of rash actions through defamation, ever more increasing and often criticized by International Organizations and by the European Court of Human Rights. This is an unacceptable attempt to silence uncomfortable journalists, asking them millions of euro as compensation for 'damages'.

In some European countries, including Italy, the phenomenon is of great concern. For these reasons and in line with the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, it is necessary that CoE Member States approve laws which provide economic ratifications which are proportional to the importance of compensation given to the journalists and charged to whom promote rash actions.

Calls upon Governments, National Parliaments and the European Parliament, to decriminalize journalists through defamation laws, as freedom of information is an essential pillar of any democratic system to guarantee the public's right to be informed.

## **12. On Concentration of ownership**

*Proposed by the NUJ UK & Ireland, United Kingdom*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

Notes with alarm the decision of the European Commission announced on April 7th 2017 to give unconditional approval to the proposed acquisition of Sky Plc by Twenty-First Century Fox, controlled by Rupert Murdoch and his family.

The Commission found that “the proposed transaction would lead to only a limited increase in Sky’s existing share of the markets for the acquisition of TV content as well as in the market for the wholesale supply of TV channels in the relevant Member States.”

The proposed deal would give the Murdoch family control of Sky News through 21st Century Fox. The Commission determination fails to take into account the dominant position of Murdoch on the UK media landscape, the scale of the influence of Fox and Sky in different markets in Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy and the UK or the manner in which Murdoch has abused his existing power and influence. The full implications for media plurality in Europe, in news coverage and the impact on broadcasting rights have been ignored by the Commission.

The Commission decision in this case is reflective of a failure to tackle the issue of media diversity. The emphasis on market share at the expense of editorial values and the absence of a robust public interest test has enabled the strengthening of media monopolies and the dilution of media diversity across Europe.

Among other European examples of takeovers, placing media organisations under one owner include the takeover of Time Warner, AT&T, and the purchase of daily newspapers magazines, radio and television stations by Patrick Drahi’s Altice Group in Italy, Gruppo L’Espresso Itedi, now owns three major newspapers – La Repubblica, La Stampa and Il Secolo XIX.

Affirms the EFJ’s commitment to the principle that media diversity is a cornerstone of democracy.

**Instructs** the Steering Committee to develop a campaign for a robust public interest test which would be applied by the European Commission when considering media mergers, the test to include strict compliance on the part of applicants to regulatory and professional codes, governance standards and a demonstrable commitment to editorial independence.

### **13. Against negative attitude of US President to the media**

*Proposed by FAPE (Spain)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), meeting in Bucharest on 17-18 May, 2017,

"Journalists are the most dishonest human beings on Earth", "The press is the true enemy of the American people", "I am in war with the media" ... These and other offensive phrases against the public task of the media communication were pronounced by the US President Donald J. Trump. Since his inauguration on January 20th, and previously during his election campaign, his threats and insults against the press have been constant. On more than one occasion, he has refused to give critical journalists time to speak during a press conference. The most striking - broadcast worldwide - was when CNN journalist Jim Acosta tried to ask questions to Trump. He answered pejorative with denials and called his media as "trash."

The media most assaulted by Trump so far have been the New York Times and the Washington Post, as well as the TV channels CNN, NBC, ABC and CBS. Tump constantly says that they spread "fake news" without contrast arguments or information by his side. In the case of the Washington Post the US President said that the exclusive about the lies of his national security advisor Michael Flynn about talks with the Russian Ambassador to the USA was "false and dishonest." The ratification of the truths published by the Post finally forced Michael Flynn to resign.

**States** the following:

- The EFJ expresses its total rejection to the offensive and negative attitude of the US President against the media that are not favourable to him. This attitude declares a profound ignorance of the democratic rules and the law in a country with press freedom. The EFJ reminds President Trump that thanks to the press Richard Nixon's President was overthrown with the publication of the Watergate scandal in 1974.
- The EFJ expresses its solidarity with the American journalists attacked by President Donald Trump and calls on their respective media to continue in their critical work, as an example of democratic normality. It also calls them for rejecting all kinds of pressures that could lead to an authoritarian, populist and intolerant direction from the US Presidency, which could be very damaging to the entire world press.

#### **14. On ending impunity in Russia**

*Proposed by the Russian Union of Journalists*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

expresses its deep concern of continued violence against Russian journalists and lack of proper official reaction for an end to impunity in Russia.

The death threats to Novaya Gazeta journalists from religious leaders in Chechnya in April, the detains and beatings of journalists covering protests meetings in March, the continues attacks on many individual journalists in various cities of Russia are still subject of endless investigations with no visible result.

The EFJ urges Russian authorities to call names of perpetrators and bring them to justice, to put end to culture of impunity against Russian journalists and stop violence against them.

The EFJ continues to support its affiliate, the RUJ in its efforts to protect journalist's lives and safety and combat impunity in Russia.

#### **15. On Kurdish channels**

*Proposed by SNJ-CGT (France)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

Eutelsat must not interrupt the broadcast of 3 Kurdish channels

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on May 18-19, 2017, expresses its deep concern at the threats to interrupt Eutelsat's broadcast of three Kurdish channels: Ronahi TV, Stêrk TV and News Channel.

In October 2016, the French trade unions (SNJ, SNJ-CGT, CFDT-Journalistes) had denounced the same process concerning two other Kurdish media, Med-Nûçe and Newroz TV and had given them their full support. The French courts had forced Eutelsat to re-establish the broadcasting of these channels.

Today, it is once again under the pressure of the Turkish audiovisual regulatory body, an organization dependent on the Erdogan regime that Eutelsat, the largest European group of satellites, the majority of which is owned by the French state, is about to interrupt these three new Kurdish channels.

Stopping the broadcasting of these media would be a blow to freedom of expression under the pressure of the Turkish regime which is to this day the largest prison in the world for journalists.

Bringing the matter to the CEO of Eutelsat, Rodolphe Belmer, to demand that his group doesn't carry out its threat.

Urges the new French government - France being a majority within Eutelsat - to stop this process, which questions the freedom to inform, one of the fundamental values in Europe.

Calls on the Steering Committee to bring these recurrent threats before the Council of Europe and to ask the Turkish authorities to intervene.

### **16. On journalists murdered in Mexico**

*Proposed by SNJ-CGT (France)*

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 May, 2017,

Expresses its strong indignation at the murder of journalist Javier Valdez in Mexico on 15 May, which must alarm and make react the entire profession.

Javier Valdez, a co-founder of the weekly *Ríodoce*, and of the newspaper *La Jornada*, was a well-known journalist in his country and throughout Latin America, notably for his investigations into drug trafficking and organized crime in the state of Sinaloa, which had brought him many threats. Also recognized internationally, he was a collaborator of the AFP.

For the EFJ, independent journalism is a pillar of democracy. The free press is a prerequisite for democracy because it puts at the disposal of citizens the elements to decide.

But to tell the truth is dangerous and journalists pay with their lives the price of this truth. By killing Javier Valdez in cold blood, it is the freedom to investigate and to inform that one assassinates.

In Mexico, the situation is particularly serious.

Javier Valdez is the seventh journalist killed since the beginning of the year. Eleven other journalists were killed in 2016. No fewer than 105 journalists have been killed since 2000.

Given the serious crisis of human rights violations against democracies and specifically against journalists, European authorities must act more firmly and demand that the Mexican government respect its commitments on the protection and the defense of press workers.

express their condolences to the relatives of Javier Valdez. They declare their solidarity with the Mexican colleagues and call for mobilization to demand guarantees for their work, respect for their lives, justice and the end of impunity.