

Committee of RTV Journalists' Unions (Koordinacija novinarskih sindikatov RTVS)

General management of the strike committee of the RTV Journalists' Unions

PRESS RELEASE

STRIKE NOTICE

We strike because we are not servants! We are a public RTV!

We have reached a point where the existence of public service broadcasting and the status of its employees are seriously threatened.

For months now, the Committee of RTV Journalists' Unions and Journalists' Associations has been drawing attention to the harmful programming and personnel moves of the RTV leadership with appeals, press conferences, invitations to talks, formal and public letters.

Yesterday, 12th May, the Committee of Journalists' Unions of RTV concluded the gathering of membership votes for a strike. 96,3 percent of votes cast were in favor of the solidarity strike with the TV Slovenia News Program and RTV's Multi Media Centre (MMC). Out of 428 members, 274 members took part in the voting, or 64% of all members of the RTV journalists' unions.

Thus, the Executive Committee of Journalists' Unions was given a mandate to announce and prepare for the strike. The strike committee, which has more than 160 members representing various RTV departments represented by the General Management of the strike committee is today starting preparations for a warning strike on 23rd May.

The situation is becoming unbearable, and the reputation of the public media is declining due to unprofessional and harmful moves by the management and the arbitrariness of the program council. Quality, expert and professional news programming on Television Slovenia has been virtually deleted, personnel decisions and appointments are carried out with disregard for editorial offices and professional criteria, journalistic and editorial autonomy are seriously endangered in the TV News Program and the MMC. The announced changes of the RTV Statute entail uncalled-for separation of TV News programs. Working conditions are deteriorating rapidly, staff development and technological progress of public service broadcasting are neglected. Many employees are leaving because they can no longer stand working in such conditions. Those who speak out, face smear campaigns, punishments and mobbing.

The Director General of RTV, who also serves as the acting Program Director of Television, actively cooperates with the President of the Program Council in threatening and punishing employees, even disregarding the potential illegality of some of these actions.

Reassignments, staff changes, cancellation of news programs, censorship attempts, a chaotic and unprofessional program scheme and the subordination of the pre-election campaign

and program content to the political interests of the ruling coalition have seriously jeopardized professional journalism on RTV and the public media mission.

The demands of the strike committee are clear.

- 1. We demand journalistic, editorial and institutional autonomy.**
- 2. We demand an agreement on personnel policy and collective negotiations regarding an increase of the lowest wages on RTV.**
- 3. We demand social dialogue with the management of the public institution.**
- 4. We demand a paid strike.**
- 5. If no agreement on resolving the strike demands is reached by 30th May 2022, we shall demand the resignation of RTV Director General Andrej Grah Whatmough, President of the Program Council Peter Gregorčič, Editor-in-Chief of TVS News Program Jadranka Rebernik and acting editor-in-chief of the MMC Igor Pirkovič.**

We are on strike because, among other things, the financial and program management is preventing the employees of the TVS News Program and MMC from working in accordance with professional standards thereby jeopardizing the impartial and objective public information service and affecting the professional integrity and credibility of this public institution.

We are on strike because we do not want to be next in line when the financial and program management splits us into "left" and "right" journalists and journalists and editorial boards become politically affiliated. We are on strike because we want to work in accordance with our program, professional and ethical rules and our professional conscience.

We are on strike because the Program Council interferes directly with our work and dictates how we should perform our professional duties. The Program Council appropriates program schemes and changes them arbitrarily, not as expected by the public, but as dictated by their political affiliates.

We are striking because the management stifles editorial autonomy by appointing chief editors whom the staff does not trust and rejects because their editing of news programming is incompetent and politically biased, because they do not know how to organize work or are skimping on their responsibilities.

We are on strike because the General Director is ignoring social partners and preventing social dialogue, because he abuses labor law to intimidate employees and contract workers, violates legislation and collective agreements.

We are on strike because the human resources and development potential of public service broadcasting are shrinking and wasting. We are on strike because well respected and trusted shows, such as the Morning News, Globus, Točka preloma, Politično, Z Mišo, Svet v letu, Slovenija v letu, ... , were cancelled and the next in line, despite a public petition with more than 60 000 signatures against this, will be the weekly program Studio City.

We are on strike because the space of plural public communication on the public RTV is narrowing.

We strike because we are not servants! We are a public RTV!

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