

FOR DIGNIFIED JOURNALISM

Journalism is one of the pillars that support a plural and democratic society, since truthful and contrasted information is indispensable so that citizens can freely decide about the future.

In order to achieve this mandate, journalists have to be able to work with written employment contracts and proper financial compensation - but from the collective we observe with concern how labour conditions of journalists have worsened gradually over the last few years; both as a result of the economic crisis that has shaken the country, and the change of the business model due to technical advances in digital media as opposed to print.

The most important thing to understand about journalism is that its entire purpose is to serve the citizens - *all* the citizens - of a democratic society. When you keep that in mind, you can better understand some of the more specific roles journalism plays.

Job insecurity comes in different forms:

- Abusive “employment” offers that do not even come close to the inter-professional minimum wage.
- Less labour agreements and “contributor’s” proliferation that earn by piece, often with minimum financial compensation that barely allows them to pay monthly mandatory contributions to the Social Security services.
- “False freelancers” where the employer does not provide a job contract to the journalist which forces them to adapt to time and labour demands as if they were a full-time employee.
- Writings with frozen or reduced wages and where often they give a double wage scale between those that worked before the economic crisis and those that arrived after that period.
- Media that increasingly ask for free collaboration with no financial reward.

- Companies that use unpaid internship students to cover internal job positions that are normally full-time paid roles, etc.

From the collective we want to demonstrate our concern for the lack of dignified labour conditions which weaken the profession and make workers vulnerable to the pressures of new phenomena like the “fight for clicks” by using false news or sensationalism. Without job security and reasonable financial compensation, journalists run the risk of becoming increasingly docile and uniform, unable to fulfil their commitment to democracy.

For all this, we demand:

-That media and communication companies, as well as public administrations and bodies, hire journalists with the correct qualifications and professional capability to carry out their tasks related to information and communication.

-That these professionals receive fair remuneration according to their experience and academic background.

-To remove abusive practices in the case of exploitation of students who work for free and graduates once they finish their curricular studies.

-Following the guidelines of the ‘Charter of Freelancers’ from the International Federation of Journalists, we ask that freelancers have similar conditions to full-time employees. This includes the right to a written job contract, to be able to fairly negotiate their financial remuneration and copyright of their own work, be guaranteed their protection taken from Social Security and enjoy the same protection, training and insurances as the rest of the full-time employees in case of being sent to conflicting places.

-To remove the abusive work schedules, contributing to the balancing of work and family life. We propose to use new technologies in order to allow flexible work time, whenever this doesn’t force professionals to be available 24 hours a day.

-Not to limit journalist’s financial rewards to the minimum interprofessional wage, and to identify journalist’s training and responsibility in their remuneration.