

WHITE
PAPER
ON
GLOBAL
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YOUTH IN UNIONS AROUND THE WORLD

In 2016, at its 29th World Congress in Angers, France, the IFJ conducted a survey on the theme

"YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR UNIONS".

What is the strategy?

How to recruit?

HERE ARE THE MAIN RESULTS. >

Globally, 31% of our members are over 51 years old. Europe and Latin America have the oldest average membership age with 51% of Latin American members aged over 51 and 47% of EU Europe. This is compared to 30 % of Eastern European, 17% of Asian and 10% of African members over 51. Not surprisingly then we see many of the initiatives to target youth coming from EU Europe where only 13% of members are under 35.

When asked why youth membership in unions was a priority, **82%** unions agreed with the statement that '**our future depends on it**'. Despite this only 23% of unions have conducted research into young journalists.

This biggest obstacles to recruitment cited were :

1. 29% : journalists do not think union cannot help them
2. 27% : journalists are not interested
3. 26% : journalists fear that union membership may damage job prospects;



International Federation of Journalists
The 30th Congress
TUNIS June 20
PRESS

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Unions are responding to the challenges of youth recruitment in the following ways.

Four unions (7%) reported that they have an official Youth quota (Kenya, Dominican Republic, Afghanistan and NUJ Nepal).

However four more unions claim to have a formal youth policy (DJV Germany, MINPROROREN Japan, CAJP Cambodia and JUS Serbia);

and a further eight unions provided examples of their youth strategies in action making a total of 16 (24%) respondents with an active youth programme.

- Examples given of youth strategies included:
- targeting and recruiting students (DJV Germany, NJ Norway),
- offering special rates and special status to students (NVJ, Netherlands),
- having a youth board (NVJ, Netherlands) ,
- special section for students, quotas at congress, and regional representation (NJ Norway)
- providing training directed at younger journalists (SUJ Sudan),
- offering associate membership to students (NUJP, Philippines)
- mentoring of younger students by older members (AJP, Belgium)

The most popular methods of Reaching out to young journalists were the following:

1. 57% Trainings
2. 43% networking events
3. 34% student / school visits
4. 30% student membership rates
5. 26% digital campaigns
6. 25% mentoring
7. 20% workplace information events
8. 18% youth committees and dedicated youth organisers
9. 16% youth leadership programmes
10. 16% Career development services



TOWARDS OUR OWN DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Each generation of journalists experiences its revolution. So-called "new" technologies are part of it. And the IFJ is no exception.

Despite ever-increasing challenges - media concentration, poorly paid journalists, poor ethics, freedom-destroying laws - IFJ unions are demonstrating week by week that they can win rights for media workers.

The telephone that each of us carries is millions of times more powerful than the power of the computers that NASA used to send a man to the moon just over five decades ago. We take for granted instant access to information and content in ways that were inconceivable 30 years ago. Digital technologies are changing every aspect of our daily lives.

This technological revolution is changing the way we work. First, this change has resulted in a massive loss of jobs for journalists and it is time for GAFAMs to pay their fair share. Not only do they capture an overwhelming share of the advertising market, but most of their profits are not taxed. Every penny of unpaid taxes is money that other media outlets, social protection systems and national pension and welfare schemes are denied.

In 2005, for just one digital journalist, there were twenty print journalists. In 2019, for every digital journalist, there were three print journalists.

If we want to remain relevant, we must not resist the future, but shape it. If we claim to represent journalists, trade unions

everywhere must open their doors to those working in digital media.

The vast majority of the new jobs being created are poorly paid, more precarious and with fewer benefits than the jobs they seek to replace. The largest survey to date on the working conditions of digital journalists has shown that they work longer hours, have an overwhelming workload, are expected to have more skills than their colleagues but receive less training, have more health and safety problems, face a massive increase in ethical and professional issues, work with smaller budgets and fewer resources and earn less...

The result is a growing army of self-employed, contract and casual workers - who are harder to reach and more vulnerable for journalists' unions and associations.

And there is an impact on journalism. With fewer journalists and financial pressure to adapt to low advertising rates, newspapers and digital media are being pushed to focus on shorter stories that take less time and money to produce. Journalists are under more pressure to write articles that generate clicks - some media outlets in the United States even use metrics to determine how much they are paid.



In this economic environment, fake news and sensationalism flourish, local democracy suffers, and in-depth investigative reporting, which takes time and costs more money to produce than lighter reports, has become increasingly rare. Why seek the truth when it is more profitable to broadcast clicks?

The problem is not always technology, but the business model of the media and how employers take advantage of these technologies not to improve journalism, but to reduce costs, undermine decent work and increase profits.

We see the digital industry as a multitude of small creative businesses. And yet the majority of journalists who work only on the Internet work for only 30 large global companies. We have more channels, more platforms, but not more owners - in fact, we have fewer than ever before. Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Apple control 95% of the world's operating systems, 95% of the world's search engines and 85% of the world's social media. In 2016, for every dollar spent on online advertising, 49% went to Google and 40% to Facebook. Only 11% went to all the others.

There is no shortage of good examples!

Almost all the major journalists' unions have seen their membership decline in recent years. To some extent, this should not surprise us. Journalism is changing rapidly. Tens of thousands of jobs have been lost in the print and broadcast media, and the traditional strengths of our unions are being replaced by low-paid and precarious online jobs.

So there are obstacles: it is probably true that many young digital media workers believe that unions are outdated, that they have no place in the modern media industry, that they are an obstacle to the development of dynamic new media and that many young workers are not interested in joining, which gives a very negative image of unions. But none of us have ever met a young worker saying: "I don't want higher pay"; "I don't want to be treated fairly at work"; "I don't want to be safe and healthy at work"!

But there are unions that have been successful in helping workers to organise and that are getting better rights and benefits for digital media workers. For example, journalists at The Guardian, Die Zeit Online, Vice, Salon, Huffington Post, Le Monde and dozens of other companies have organised, won collective bargaining rights, improved wages, and successfully resolved issues ranging from working hours to contractual issues.

There are many examples to follow, and there is always reason for hope.



COVID-19 HAS INCREASED INEQUALITIES IN THE MEDIA

“Women are working from home, juggling childcare and educating children alongside their job. Some have taken reduced hours to cope with this, others have had to risk their vulnerable parents' health for childcare instead of the father taking on anywhere near half of these duties.”

These words from a Spanish journalist were included in response to the IFJ's latest survey on Covid-19 and women journalists, published in July 2020.

They highlight a situation of high stress for women journalists during the pandemic and bring to light difficulties of an already precarious and fragile sector where women usually pay the highest price.

They also confirm the finding of an IFJ survey conducted in April which highlighted that while women journalists' working conditions tended to be less affected by the COVID-19 outbreak than those of men, two-thirds of them had suffered higher stress and anxiety as a result of the crisis compared to just half of men.

The July survey, which was specifically targeted at women and gathered over 500 responses from 52 countries, showed that more than three-quarters of women have seen their level of stress increased during the pandemic, half of them pointing at multitasking as the main cause.

Women journalists have faced increased

anxiety, stress and having to work long hours, taking on responsibility for much of the work in the home, including home-schooling or childcare when schools were closed, at the same time as having to also do their full time job.

A majority of women pointed at an increase of inequalities and 66% highlighted balancing work and private life as a major issue.

Respondents urged employers and governments to better regulate and organise teleworking as a way to limit intensive stress and tackle ongoing inequalities.

They pointed at the need for employers to provide adequate working equipment including adequate bandwidth, define working hours and breaks, and understand the reality of working from home while caring for children.

A MAJORITY OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS POINTED AT AN INCREASE OF INEQUALITIES



THE CRISIS FACING JOURNALISM IN THE FACE OF COVID-19

Three in four journalists have faced official restrictions, obstruction or intimidation in reporting on Covid-19, according to a major survey of more than 1300 frontline journalists in 77 countries.

Two-thirds of staff and freelance journalists have also suffered pay cuts, lost revenue, job losses, cancelled commissions or worsening working conditions, according to the survey carried out by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) between 26-28 April 2020.

The survey of 1308 journalists also revealed that as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic:

- Nearly every freelance journalist has lost revenue or work opportunities
- More than half of all journalists are suffering from stress and anxiety
- More than a quarter lack essential equipment to enable them to work safely from home, while one in four lack any protective equipment to work in the field.
- Dozens of journalists have been arrested, faced lawsuits or been assaulted.
- More than a third of journalists have shifted their focus to covering Covid-19 related stories.

When asked about the state of media freedom in their countries the vast majority said it had got worse. From Greece to Indonesia and from Chad to Peru journalists used words such as

precarious, problematic, terrible, worse, declining and restricted to assess the media freedom environment.

Respondents also exposed the toll on journalists with many citing job losses, longer hours and fewer resources as obstacles to proper coverage of the pandemic. In many countries the lack of social protection networks and fair employment practices are driving journalists to desperation.

One female Peruvian freelance told the IFJ: *"The state is unprepared for this pandemic, there are sectors in total abandonment by the authorities, corruption continues, while at the same time media companies have shown they do not have institutional policies to alleviate our despair, such as the lack of income. Many families are on the edge of poverty"*.

A Greek women journalist added: *"I work more but earn less money and the newspaper owner I work for owes me and my colleague over 7 months pay but the government does nothing about this"*.

Many journalists complained of increasing attacks on media freedom. Almost one in four journalists said they had faced growing difficulties accessing information from government or official sources. Many reported being verbally attacked by politicians. Others complained of restrictions on asking questions at press conferences and restrictions being imposed on the movement of journalists during the crisis, including the withdrawal of recognition of press cards. Some worried that the total focus on Covid-related stories meant other important issues were being ignored.



One female Brazilian journalist said: *“The federal government despises journalists. It attacks the press every day for the information it publishes and discredits and humiliates journalists”*.

A male journalist in India added: *“Press freedom has become increasingly restrictive. Journalists have been arrested for reporting stories highlighting the government's shortcomings”*.

But respondents also praised journalists for risking their own safety to report on the pandemic and for trying to seek out independent sources and counter disinformation.

A Portuguese journalist responded: *“There are bad situations – more press release, less real reporting, press conferences without questions, we work more hours, a lot more hours, cell phones don't stop, we are confined, always working, it's bad for our health. Yet there's also a sense that we are going through extraordinary times and journalists are responding, there's more motivation to report. Like with doctors and health staff, this is also a time for journalism”*.

The survey's findings back up calls made by the IFJ and representatives of more than 200 million working people across the globe for urgent action to save jobs, protect independent media and fund quality journalism.

42% of respondents are women

1308 journalists took part in the survey from 77 countries/territories : Angola, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo-Brazzaville, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Luxemburg, Macau, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uganda, Uruguay, USA, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam

42% of respondents were female, 58% male.

57% were employed, 43% were freelance.

Read the Statistics: https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Statistics.pdf

The Global Platform for Quality Journalism, a call by journalists' unions in 146 countries, demands urgent measures to protect and reinforce public interest journalism including:

- A tax on the revenues of tech giants such as Facebook and Google to create a global fund to support independent media
- The use of tax and fiscal policy to reduce the burden on journalists and media
- Health and public advertising campaigns to support local media

These results show a worrying trend of declining media freedom and cuts to journalism at the very time when access to information and quality journalism is so crucial. Journalism is a public good and it deserves public support and an end to political obstruction and interference.