

Call for Documentaries
Regulating for Decent Work Conference
International Labour Organization,
Geneva, Switzerland

The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a specialized agency of the United Nations that works on workers' rights issues, will host a three-day conference on the *Future of Work* on 3-5 July, 2017 at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The conference is the 5th in a series of biennial conferences on "Regulating for Decent Work". Details on the conference theme are provided in the attached document.

At the 4th Regulating for Decent Work Conference in 2015, the conference incorporated an art event with an exhibition of the photographs of Bangladeshi photographer, Ismail Ferdous.

This year's conference aims to feature a documentary film that addresses the theme(s) of the conference (please read attached document). One film will be chosen from the entries and the filmmaker will be invited to the conference in Geneva to participate at the screening, including in a discussion of the film following its screening. The conference will pay for all travel expenses of the filmmaker as well as an honorarium of 2,500 USD.

As English is the language of the conference, the film must either be in English or have English subtitles. It should range in length from around 25' to 45' (or be able to be edited to that length).

Interested filmmakers should submit a short, written summary of the film, their CV and a link on how the organizing committee can access the film to view it, to rdw@ilo.org. Entries should be received by 20 March, 2017. The winner will be notified of their selection by 20 April, 2017.

5th Regulating for Decent Work Conference: The Future of Work

The world of work is undergoing novel and rapid changes that will endure and likely intensify. Driven by massive and continuous technological changes and globalization, the world economy has generated prosperity, yet also vast unemployment and underemployment. Disparities in the global workforce remain striking and are reflected in trends that include the lower participation rates and wages of women; large numbers who continue to work in extreme poverty, particularly in low-income countries; growing migration for work; and an urgent need to ensure decent care for a rapidly expanding older population. Yet in responding to these challenges, policy-makers confront novel features of working life and governance: the urgent need to secure employment for many of the world's workers; intensifying downward pressures on working conditions and the challenges of establishing floors of minimum social protection and labour conditions; the internationalization of production through global value chains; and the sustained presence of informal work, including through new forms of contracting for waged labour. The conference is organized around four tracks.

Track I. Work and society

Track I explores the changing interaction between work and society. Paid work serves a key economic function, enabling people to meet the material needs of themselves and their families so as to participate actively in society. More broadly, work is site of social connection, and, where it occurs in decent conditions, a positive aspect of individual identity. However, the ongoing transformation of work, employment and the labour market is reconfiguring the relationship between work and society. While new forms of work can open up improved economic and social opportunities for those with the relevant skills, they also risk leaving many people impoverished and excluded. Blurring boundaries between work and private life may allow some to better balance work and family, yet others continue to struggle with the unequal distribution of unpaid work, including care work, which remains a driver of inequality.

Track II. Decent jobs for all: new jobs for the future and their nature

As labour markets around the globe recover, albeit slowly, from the deepest crisis of the past few decades, new challenges are creating constraints for the world of work. Technological change, globalisation of production and consumption, aging societies and a shift in population growth from developed to emerging and developing countries, along with heightened environmental risks, create new challenges for the world of work. Global unemployment remains stubbornly high, especially for young people. Labour income shares continue to decline. Non-standard forms of employment are on the rise, and wage employment has lost momentum, with self-employment and informality spreading even in advanced industrialised economies. Rent-seeking by special interest groups has further contributed to an inequitable growth in earnings and decent jobs. Furthermore, jobs are not necessarily where workers are, and rising inequalities have created incentives for workers to migrate.

Track III. The organization of work and production: challenges for decent work

In an increasingly globalised economy, technological advancement and competitiveness are bringing forth rapid changes in the organization of work and production. Geographical fragmentation and the expansion of global supply chains have meant that multiple enterprises are involved in the production of goods and services, with work diffused through a network of entities and individuals, and blurred lines of responsibility. In addition, regulatory gaps and changes in labour regulations as well as other tax and social policies, have also contributed to the growth of “non-standard” forms of work, including triangular employment relationships, disguised and dependent self-employment, and “on-call” work. These developments have weakened the labour standards of core workers as well as contributing to a growing ‘informalization’ of the labour market. While some organizational changes have brought benefits to businesses, in terms of cost-saving and greater efficiency, they pose challenges to existing business models and, most importantly, to the social protection and labour rights of workers, as they often circumvent the existing regulatory framework, operating in some instances in an unregulated environment. Coupled with limited laws and regulations governing the responsibility of lead firms towards their workforce, the end result is an increase in insecure work. Thus the changes in the organization of production risks undermining the employer-employee working relationships that form the basis of international labour standards and national labour laws, with profound consequences for social justice.

Track IV. The governance of work: labour regulation’s complex future

As the global economy rapidly evolves, the question of law’s response has become both vital and complex. Legal regulation is a crucial component of effective policies towards socially just development. Yet the array of challenges captured in the Future of Work initiative are accompanied by complexities in securing effective legal regulation. These challenges - which are also crucial research questions for the interdisciplinary study of legal regulation - include: the role of labour law in employment creation; the enduring challenge of effective enforcement, in particular in financially-constrained states; the expansion of ‘non-standard’ forms of employment, including through the rise of the ‘gig economy’; the destabilising of once-secure rights through vocal challenges to tripartism, collective bargaining, and the right to strike; the myriad modes through which working relations evade regulatory regimes, particularly in the global South, that are captured in the notion of the ‘informal economy’; the impact of austerity policies on worker protections and job quality; the challenge of effectively measuring and comparing the impact of regulatory regimes; the relationship between CSR initiatives and state-led interventions in the regulation of global value chains; and the most effective role and form of transnational standards, including those that emanate from the ILO.