

ILO marks its 90th anniversary with social dialogue for decent work and a fair globalization in Central and Eastern Europe

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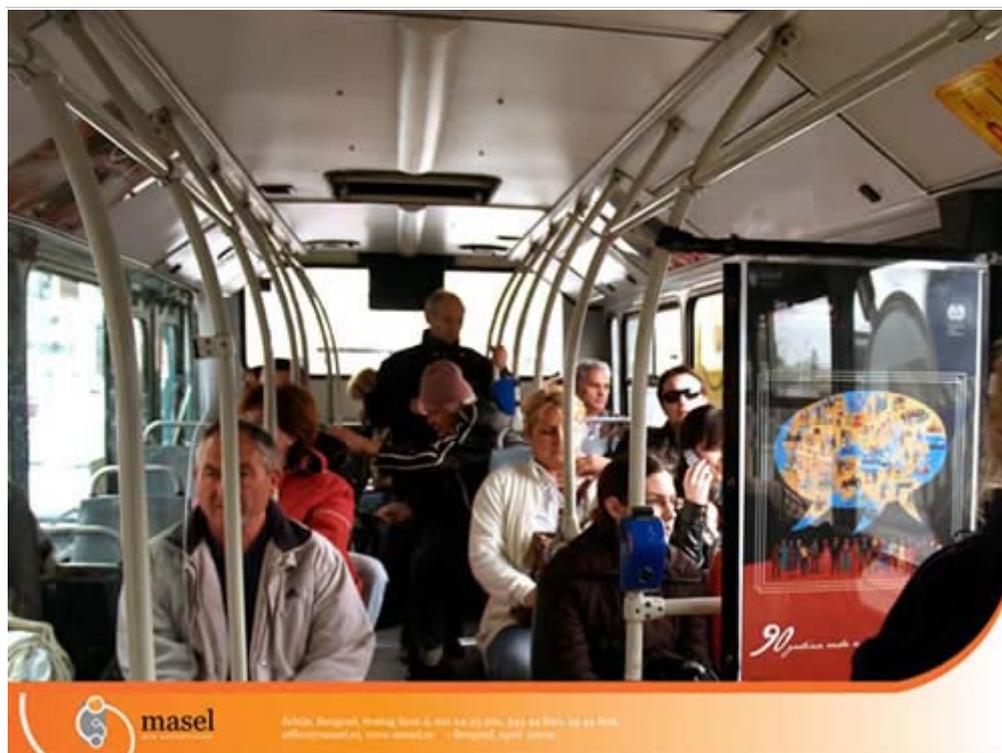
BUDAPEST (ILO News) - Amid the worst financial and jobs crisis since the Great Depression, the International Labour Organization (ILO) marked its 90th anniversary in the week of 21-28 April and in September 2009. During this period, there was a global convergence on the common theme of social dialogue for decent work and a fair globalization in commemorative events in more than 100 countries across the world.

In Central and Eastern Europe six high level national conferences were organized in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine in the last week of April, in May and in September accompanied by awareness raising campaigns, presentations of ILO publications and exhibitions of the ILO's technical cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe.

Among senior officials attending these events were the President of the Republic of Albania Mr. Bamir Topi, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mr. Sredoje Novic, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour of Hungary Mr László Herzog and the UN Resident Coordinators of these countries. In addition to the ILO's tripartite constituents - governments, workers and employers - participants included parliamentarians, UN country team members, academics, representatives of NGOs, and the general public. These events also provided national and regional platforms for highlighting the role the ILO has played in transition in Central and Eastern Europe and in addressing key contemporary issues.

In **Serbia**, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy State Secretary Ms. Snezana Lakicevic Stojacic and the presidents of workers' and employers' organizations addressed a tripartite audience from Croatia and Serbia to commemorate the ILO's 90th anniversary on 23th April 2009, in Belgrade. The celebration was followed by a tripartite conference to share good practices on occupational safety and health (OSH).

From 15-30 April posters marking the 90th Anniversary of the ILO and the World Day for Occupational Safety and Health appeared in trams, buses and trolleys of the public transport system of the City of Belgrade, which serves 1 million passengers daily.



ILO posters in a bus of Belgrade

Moldova marked the ILO's 90th anniversary by holding a national conference entitled "Towards decent work through sound social dialogue" on 29 April in Chisinau. The Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade Mr. Sergiu Sainciuc and representatives of trade unions and employers evaluated cooperation with the ILO in the framework of the Decent Work Country Programme of Moldova. Participants said that social dialogue is a pertinent tool to achieve social justice, and it is crucial to mitigate the worst effects of the global crisis in Moldova. Shortcomings of social dialogue in Moldova were mentioned while the constituents reinforced their commitment to overcome the pitfalls. ILO expertise to promote social dialogue was considered very valuable to strengthen social partnership in Moldova. The event was attended by representatives of government, social partners, civil society, academic media and international organizations.



Participants of the national conference entitled "Towards decent work through sound social dialogue" on 29 April 2009 in Chisinau

ILO National Coordinator Ms Ala Lipciu and social partners spoke in the national and local media on how the ILO's work has improved people's lives.

In **Ukraine**, the national campaign on the ILO's 90th anniversary started with a presentation of ILO publications in the National Library of Ukraine and the National Parliamentarian Library on 14 and 16 April, 2009. ILO Conventions and Recommendations 1919-2007 in Ukrainian were published on CD to make them accessible for students, professionals and the general public.



Participants of the All-Ukrainian Tripartite Conference on 28 April

The ILO press club in Ukraine on 21 April was also dedicated to the 90th anniversary where social partners and government officials spoke about the ILO's policies and achievements in Ukraine to journalists coming from eleven media.

On 28 and 29 April round-tables and conferences on the occasion of the ILO's 90th Anniversary and 55th Anniversary of Ukraine's membership in the ILO were conducted in many regions of Ukraine, particularly in Luhansk, Donetsk, Cherkassy and Dnipropetrovs'k oblasts (regions). On 29 April a Tripartite round-table was organized in Chernigov region by the social partners: the Main Department of Labour and Social Protection for the Population of Chernigov regional state administration, the Federation of Trade Union organizations of Chernigov Oblast as well as the Regional Federation of Employers (affiliated to the Federation of Employers of Ukraine). Around 40 participants attended this tripartite round-table. The ILO National Coordinator in Ukraine, Vasyl Kostrytsya read the message of Juan Somavia Director-General of the ILO on the occasion of the ILO's 90th anniversary and talked about the history of the organization, its principles and its implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme in Ukraine. The Head of the Department of International Relations of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine, Mr. Vasyl Shilov also participated in this tripartite round-table. Information on this round-table was covered by two regional newspapers as well as on Oblast TV Channel and radio.

Kiev also held an All-Ukrainian Tripartite Conference on 28 April on the occasion of the ILO's 90th Anniversary and 55th Anniversary of Ukraine's membership in the ILO. Mr. Viktor Ivankevych, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine, talked about the cooperation of Ukraine and ILO as a strategy for decent work in Ukraine. The social partners evaluated the ILO's role in the introduction and development of social dialogue in Ukraine and discussed how social dialogue can become a key to wellbeing and prosperity. Up to 100 participants included ILO constituents, members of Parliament of Ukraine, Ambassadors of foreign countries in Ukraine, the EC Delegation to Ukraine, etc.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the National Tripartite Conference on 28 April highlighted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the ILO's role to achieve progress and social justice in the context of globalization. The meeting was opened by Mr. Sredoje Novic, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ms. Christine McNab, UN Resident Coordinator.



From left to right: Ms. Christine McNab, UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Sredoje Novic, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ms. Lejla Tanovic, ILO National Coordinator

In **Albania**, the President of the Republic, Mr Bamir Topi, honored the National Tripartite Conference "ILO: 90 Years Working for Social Justice" on 6 May in Tirana. The President of Albania, The UN Resident Coordinator Ms Gulden Turkoz-Cosslett, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Mr Kastriot Sulka and the social partners assessed the ILO's role to promote decent and productive employment, as well as social dialogue in Albania and the ILO's contribution to the One UN Programme of the country. Participants also highlighted the need for common efforts to mitigate the worst effects of the financial crisis. The event was followed by all the major newspapers and TV channels of Albania.



President of the Republic of Albania, Mr Bamir Topi delivering speech at the celebration of the ILO's 90th anniversary in Albania

In **Hungary**, a National Tripartite Conference was organized on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the ILO on 3-4 September 2009, in Budapest, Hungary with the participation of high level representatives of the Hungarian government, workers' and employers' organizations, ILO officials, academics, representatives of UN agencies, etc. Among senior officials attending the event were Mr László Herzog, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour of Hungary and Mr Kari Tapiola, Executive Director of the ILO.

The conference assessed the role of the ILO in the transition of Central and Eastern European countries. Participants agreed that the ILO played an important role in establishing and strengthening social dialogue and tripartism in Hungary and also in the region.



Participants of the first day panel: from left to right: Mr Károly GYÖRGY, International Secretary of the National Confederation of Hungarian Trade Unions; Mrs Terézia BOROSNÉ-BARTHA, International Director of the Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists; Mr László HERCZOG, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour of Hungary; Ms Petra ULSHOEFER, ILO Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Mr Kari TAPIOLA, ILO Executive Director; Mr Lajos HÉTHY, Director of the Institute for Social Policy and Labour, Labour Directorate