



Decent Work

Social Justice

Fair Globalisation



Call for Papers

Financialization of Capital – Deterioration of Working Conditions

**5. Global Labour University Conference
Tata Institute for Social Sciences
Mumbai, India, 22-24 February 2009**

Social Justice, Decent Work , Fair Globalisation

The 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation urges for a shift in global policies to achieve Social Justice and Decent Work. The Declaration calls to examine and consider all international economic and financial policies in the light of the fundamental objective of social justice.

The Global Labour University www.global-labour-university.org is a network of trade unions and universities that aims at facilitating research, debate and qualification programmes in order to address these global labour issues. At its annual conference in 2009 trade unionists and scholars are invited to present papers and discuss the challenges for organised labour as outlined in the two topics, which are elaborated on below.

I. Global capital mobility and its impact on wages and employment conditions.

The desire of enterprises to maximise profit has not changed over time. Nevertheless enterprise behaviour has changed dramatically over the last decades. Aggressive short term profit maximization by financial investors is a key feature of this new environment. Despite some impressive campaigns and organizing successes trade unions were not able to defend successfully workers' interest against these new structural forces. Informal and precarious employment is on the rise, concessions of workers in regular employment is widespread and inequality is growing. Hopes, voluntary corporate social responsibility could make a fundamental difference, evaporated under the heat of global competition. Increasingly the debate refocuses on the role of states and (global) hard law to reign in global capital markets.

Papers are invited that

- a) assess the structural forces driving global financial markets,
- b) analyse the impact of these trends on investment and employment strategies of companies,
- c) suggest policy options to limit financial market volatility, strengthen workers' rights and promote productive investment instead of speculative bubbles.

II. Extending rights and collective bargaining to workers in precarious and informal employment

Global companies and the global financial industry have been successfully influencing decision making on national and international level in order to shape legislation and global rules in favour of individual and common business interests. The demand for immediate high returns from financial investors and the inability to raise prices in a competitive environment do result in massive pressure on wages and working conditions. Millions of workers are not protected by law or collective agreements. They are forced to accept precarious or informal employment.

Civil society groups including trade unions are becoming more global to defend their interest as workers and citizens against highest rates of return on private investment as the guiding principle of global policy making. This requires innovative approaches to organizing and changes in institutions and regulations to readjust the balance of power between private business interest and society at large in particular as transparent and accountable democratic decision making has in many cases been substituted by lobbying and supranational bodies that lack democratic control and legitimacy.

Papers are invited that

- a. discuss organizing of workers in informal and precarious employment
- b. assess policies of trade unions to improve legal regulations and labour market institutions to secure that all workers can effectively exercise their rights to organise and represent their interests.
- c. analyses trade union strategies to respond to the more aggressive business strategies of global companies.

Format

Theoretical and empirical studies should focus on trade union practices and policy recommendations that have the potential to strengthen workers' representation and to promote social justice in a global economy.

The workshop will bring together an international group of scholars and trade unionists. It will feature working groups, paper presentations, and panel discussions involving both academics and trade unionists. Papers will be presented mainly in small interactive working groups to allow for in-depth discussion and development of ideas for possible future research and cooperation. A selected number of papers will be published in the 2009 GLU Yearbook

Papers should be submitted in English.

Proposals for papers should be sent in electronic format by 1 December 2008 to:

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The proposal should be a two to three pages abstract that

- 1) gives the name, address and institutional affiliation of the author/s;*
- 2) outlines the main idea; and*
- 3) indicates what methodology will be used.*

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