

Leave no-one behind - approach more important than ever

Contribution by Kolping International to the 110th session of the virtual International Labour Conference 27.5. -11 6.2022, prepared by Dr Hildegard Hagemann, Kolping International, Check against delivery

Dear President, dear delegates,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the General Director's report on behalf of the Catholic Social movement KOLPING INTERNATIONAL which has around 400,000 members in over 60 countries.

We congratulate the Director-General on his last report, in which he addresses a significant phenomenon in these times of crisis by focusing on the LDCs, where the majority population works in the informal economy. He thus puts a semicolon after his future-oriented term of office, on which we expressly congratulate him. Under his leadership, the ILO not only prepared its constituents for the future in the world of work, but also found a clearly recognizable, solution-oriented voice for the principle of 'leave no one behind' in the orchestra of international organizations.

As a semicolon indicates that the so far elaborated thought will be continued with a fresh impulse, also the ILO and her constituents have to work on the respective problems with great energy. Four comments on this from the point of view of Kolping International:

1. It is well known that access to workers in the informal economy is often provided by civil society groups, particularly in LDCs. It is therefore important to anchor the inclusion of NGOs in a suitable form within the social dialogue process. In many countries, however, we are seeing civil society organisations being increasingly restricted by state power. The ILO must therefore take a clear stance on behalf of CS.
2. After the pandemic, the informal economy is expanding, not only in the LDCs, but above all in the emerging economies whose comparative advantage in the global economy is 'cheap' (unprotected) labor. Progressive informalisation of the world of work endangers the implementation of decent work. Legal regulation is needed more urgently than ever to prevent this and make corporate responsibility binding.
3. Leaving no one behind also means bringing justice to the weak and the most vulnerable. This requires a strong ILO at the negotiating table. An ILO with binding-reinforced instruments that can also impose sanctions on governments and social partners who violate labor rights. Special attention is also required to support women, sexual minorities and foreign workers by the ILO through direct cooperation and intervention, in particular in dictatorial regimes.
4. The eco-social transformation of the economic and working world also needs a proactive ILO that raises and reviews the claim to coherence. The establishment of an international labor tribunal is also indispensable for the architecture of a world community based on solidarity?.

As a Catholic organization we thank the outgoing DG Guy Ryder for his support of our common initiative - Future of Work - Labor after Laudato si. With our first document, 'Care is Work- Work is Care', we made a contribution to the discussion that also enables dialogue with the new management. So we congratulate the designated DG Gilbert Houngbo and hope for a good continuation of our cooperation.