

FLÚ Labour Organisation Committee meeting

12. 4. 2022 10:00–11:20

Committee members in attendance: Teresa R. Baron, Jan Frei, Juraj Hvorecký, Robert Novotný, Pavel Nývlt, Darja Zoubková.

Taking minutes: Pavel Nývlt.

Regarding possible **extraordinary support from the OSPVV fund** for FLÚ employees in a difficult economic situation, Darja Zoubková warned against the bureaucratic complexity of the application, but Jan Frei noted that the OSPVV representative was very helpful and it would be a shame not to contact him. The committee agreed that it would be best to prepare the necessary documents and wait for further developments in the meantime.

Darja Zoubková expressed her opposition to excessive focus on contracts of indefinite duration and recommended focusing instead on increasing tariffs according to the FLU internal wage regulation, which she considers too low, not just for O5 employees. She pointed out that even reducing the wage of an employee with an indefinite contract is very difficult and that an increase in mandatory expenses would be dangerous for the institute. She expressed the belief that the conclusion of contracts for an indefinite period should be primarily the responsibility of the heads of departments.

Robert Novotný pointed out that in the event of an emergency, it is relatively easy for employers to terminate their employment contracts with any employee on the basis of their absence from the workplace at the hours specified in the employment regulations.

Juraj Hvorecký added that when introducing the upper limit for chaining of fixed-term contracts, researchers themselves asked for an exception in the Labor Code; the nature of scientific work has not changed since then, so we would now have to argue against something we advocated.

Darja Zoubková expressed her belief that the situation with the contracts is too complex to be able to determine the requisite level of budgetary flexibility on the basis of statistics from the HR department. She stated that essential data on employment contracts were available in the annual reports and promised to prepare an excerpt from them.

Juraj Hvorecký pointed out that it is necessary to take into account the existence of three categories of researchers at the FLÚ - employees paid purely from institutional sources, of which there are not many; employees paid only from grants/targeted funding, with whom it is not possible to establish a open-ended contract; and employees paid from both sources. The introduction of open-ended contracts for only the first category would discourage employees from submitting grant applications. He emphasized that without a significant change in tariffs,

it would be necessary to advertise the positions of editors, etc. with a salary that would be completely uncompetitive within a few years.

The committee then discussed the advantages and disadvantages of securing external editors, and the financing of publishing activities at FLÚ in general.

Pavel Nývlt suggested discussing with the director of the institute a preferential increase in tariff wages of lower income categories. He expressed the belief that this was also a long-term interest of the institute's management.

Juraj Hvorecký requested that one member of the committee include in the **draft collective agreement** the comments of the OSPVV lawyer and those arising from the membership meeting. Pavel Nývlt promised to do so by the end of April.

Juraj Hvorecký informed the committee that after Easter he will negotiate with representatives of the HR department on amendments to the proposed **FLÚ Working Code**. He invited the members of the committee to send him their comments on its text by the end of the week, if they had not already done so.

With regard to Article 22 of the draft Working Code, Darja Zoubková drew attention to the need to better ensure the **maintenance of the FLÚ premises** and suggested that this issue be discussed with the institute's management.

Pavel Nývlt called for a discussion on the establishing of open-ended contracts with employees after working for a given number of years. The Committee agreed that open-ended contracts are needed most by employees under the age of 35, but it would be difficult for the FLU to offer them. However, Robert Novotný emphasized that older employees are less flexible in the labor market. The committee discussed the situation with open-ended contracts at other institutes in the third scientific field.

Jan Frei gave a summary of events at the **annual conference of the OSPVV**. Two new members of the Joint Committee of the Union were elected and a call was made to the basic trade unions to: 1) increase activities aimed at increasing their membership base; 2) emphasize the crucial importance of the collective agreement for the protection of employees' rights; 3) seek to ensure that real wages do not fall below current levels; 4) deal with the social and health situation of employees. The committees of the basic trade unions were instructed to send collective agreements to the OSPVV by 15 May 2022, or information as to why these agreements could not be concluded. The OSPVV, in coordination with the CMKOS, will strive to ensure that financial support for the Czech Academy of Sciences is not reduced. Jan Frei also pointed out that unions should pay attention to paying insurance for employees from outside the EU.

Darja Zoubková noted here that the employment of non-Czech citizens was an extremely complex issue (even in relation to employees from EU countries), which leads to mistakes easily, and that cooperation is needed with the relevant employee, who has to obtain the necessary forms from his or her home country.

Jan Frei added that the basic trade unions were further invited to: 5) entrust their bank accounts to more than one manager; 6) ensure the presence of a trade union representative during occupational safety inspections; 7) not neglect the interests of technical staff when negotiating collective agreements. When asked by Juraj Hvorecký, he stated that the date of the next meeting of the representatives of the basic trade unions had not yet been set. Finally, he pointed out that he had received a package of trade union publications at the OSPVV meeting. These will be included in the union library.

Juraj Hvorecký informed the committee that the balance of the account as of April 11, 2022 amounts to CZK 127,412.43.

Darja Zoubková pointed out that members do not have to pay a percentage of their salary to the trade union, but can pay a fixed amount. Juraj Hvorecký added that there were few contributions exceeding the amount of CZK 3,000 deductible from the tax base last year.

Juraj Hvorecký pointed out that the membership meeting did not get around to discussing the **communication of the committee with the membership base**. The Committee decided to e-mail the minutes of the membership meeting to all members and to invite those members who are interested to receive e-mail notifications of the publication of the minutes of the committee meetings to sign up.

Juraj Hvorecký expressed the hope that the next membership meeting could take place before the end of June, after the discussion of the new draft collective agreement with the management of the institute. Finally, he said that according to Ing. Rybáková, **the contribution from the FKSP** will be distributed this year under the same conditions and in the same amount as last year.

The **date of the next meeting** of the Committee was tentatively set for Monday, May 23, 2022.