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The Finnish Metalworkers' Union, the Federation of Professional and Managerial Staff YTN and the Union of Salaried Employees TU:

Re-focusing on decent work

The Finnish Metalworkers' Union, the Federation of Professional and Managerial Staff YTN and the Union of Salaried Employees TU express their concern about more and more employees having to cope with uncertain and insecure employment conditions in Finland and around the world.

Business operations that aim at maximising profits and flexibility are the main source of insecure employment conditions. Entrepreneurial risk is transferred to workers whose employment becomes fixed-term, seasonal, uncertain and sporadic. In many countries these people are not covered by employment legislation at all and do not have a social safety net to fall back on.

Trade unions stress that multinational companies are in a key position when it comes to preserving decent work as the main form of employment in the world. Companies must offer decent work and respect human dignity in both industrialised and developing countries and thus bear their social responsibilities as part of business. One's salary should be enough for supporting oneself and one's family. On the other hand, responsible companies that offer decent work are in a privileged position when consumers and investors make their choices.

In Finland insecure employment culminates in subcontracting and temporary employment. Unscrupulous exploitation of foreign labour by disregarding workers' rights is common in long and often international subcontracting networks.

Shop stewards are there to see that companies and their subcontractors adhere to employment regulations. Improvements in the position of shop stewards agreed upon in new collective agreements this autumn increase their possibilities to intervene in problems with subcontracting networks.

The European Metalworkers' Federation EMF and the International Metalworkers' Federation IMF are organising their second theme week on insecure and uncertain employment conditions. The theme week is part of a campaign by the International Trade Union Confederation ITUC. In Finland shop stewards from the Metalworkers' Union, YTN and TU are gathered together today, on 6th October, to talk about what decent work is and whether businesses meet their obligations and liability in subcontracting. The seminar also focuses on recent collective bargaining results.

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<http://www.precariouswork.eu/>

<http://www.decentwork.org/>

<http://www.imfmetal.org/index.cfm?n=696&l=2>

<http://www.ituc-csi.org>