



TRADE UNIONS

EVENTS

JOURNAL



Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia



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Welcome speech

The “Trade Unions Events” journal has been continuing its activities for the second year, covering and publicizing the work carried out by the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA). This magazine has become a platform where important events, programs and activities of trade union life are presented, which contribute to the awareness of workers and the protection of their labor, social, economic and professional rights.

Today, more than ever, being informed is important, and we continue our work, strengthening the trade union movement in Armenia and disseminating information.



The guest of the author's program of the Association of SMEs "Taxes, Duties, Passions" is Elen Manaseryan, President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia

President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, Elen Manaseryan, participated in the author's program of the Association of Small and Medium-sized Businesses "Taxes, Duties, Passions".

The program is dedicated to discussing the following issues:

What types of trade unions exist?

What functions do they serve?

Why did ZCMC workers file complaints?

What role did the Confederation play in restoring the violated rights of ZCMC workers?

How can labor law be balanced with the right to conduct business?

Medical insurance: Is it a new form of taxation or a truly effective system?

You can watch the full video by clicking the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPpzus5zZe0>

A discussion on the draft law to reduce the working day by one hour was held at the initiative of the Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia



On March 3, at the initiative of the NA Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs, a working discussion was held on the draft law to reduce the working day by one hour.

The discussion was attended by Chairwoman of the Committee Heriknaz Tigranyan, Members of the National Assembly, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Narek Mkrtchyan, Deputy Minister Ruben Sargsyan, President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia Elen Manaseryan, lawyer Anna Barikeyan, and President of the Republican Union of Employers Vahagn Hambardzumyan.

Mrs. Heriknaz Tigranyan highlighted the importance of engaging with social partner structures, noting that such dialogue allows for the exchange of diverse and sometimes opposing views, which in turn contributes to the refinement and improvement of the draft law.

Minister Narek Mkrtchyan emphasized that the goal of the proposal is to increase labor productivity and work capacity, as well as to support a more balanced relationship between work and family life.

Mrs. Elen Manaseryan, President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, expressed her support for the draft, presenting a fact-based and positive position.

Representatives of the Executive Body presented statistical and research data, supported by international examples, which show that reduced working hours can positively impact workers' physical and mental health, as well as their overall productivity.

Socio-economic challenges in the Republic of Armenia and Trade Unions

The Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Armenia, organized a trade union and sports event from March 13 to 16, 2025, entitled "Socio-Economic Challenges in the Republic of Armenia and Trade Unions."

Over the course of four days, more than 115 trade unionists participated in discussions addressing the current socio-economic challenges facing Armenia. The event featured separate sessions on a range of important topics, including comprehensive health insurance, the income declaration system for individuals, the recent increase in public transport fares in Yerevan, the introduction of ILO Convention No. 190 on "Violence and harassment", ongoing transitions in the world of work, and the relevance of social democratic values in both the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Armenia.

In addition to the thematic discussions, participants also engaged in a sports competition featuring chess, table tennis, darts, and arm wrestling. The winners were awarded by the presidents of the respective sports federations and by prominent figures from the Armenian sports community.

You can watch the event's summary video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xk8kPCxFf4>



The comprehensive health insurance premium will rise each year with inflation, becoming an additional financial burden for working citizens. President of the Confederation of Trade Unions

Insurance payments will be an additional financial burden for working citizens, said Elen Manaseryan, President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, in an interview with Tert.am.

The draft law of the Republic of Armenia "On Comprehensive Health Insurance" was posted on the e-draft platform for discussion but has now been removed. At this stage, the draft is in its embryonic phase and still needs to be developed.

"Even now, in our subjective opinion, there's still room for improvement. If you earn a salary of 75,000 drams—or between 75,000 and 150,000 drams—your monthly insurance payment will be 40% of 13,700 drams. According to the current draft, the state is to pay the remaining part, but naturally, the state will pay it from the taxes you pay—meaning you are still the one paying. If you earn between 150,000 and 300,000 drams, you will pay 60% of 13,700 drams, and again, the rest will be paid by the state—which again comes from your taxes. And if you earn more than 300,000 drams, you'll pay the entire 13,700 drams—100%—with no state 'assistance' at all," she said.

According to Manaseryan, there are three global models of comprehensive health insurance, but none of them resemble Armenia's proposed approach:

"One model splits the cost between the employer and the employee; in another, the employer pays the full amount; and in a third, the employer, employee, and state all contribute. But that's not all. Since the state must pay its portion from the annual budget, the amount is subject to change every year. That means the 13,700-dram payment isn't fixed—it will be reviewed annually in line with inflation (Consumer Price Index). So the payment will increase yearly, regardless of whether the citizen's salary increases or not."

She expressed concern about why employers have no obligations under this plan, even though employees often face stress and develop health issues at work, while simultaneously generating value for their employer:

"It shouldn't be an extra burden on a person. It shouldn't be implemented in the way it's currently written. According to the Statistical Committee, the poverty rate in 2023 was 23.7%, and among those were working poor. If a citizen works but is still poor, that is a tragedy. Now the state is placing yet another burden on the working poor. If someone earns the minimum wage of 75,000 drams and has to pay insurance, and given that many workers—especially in the service sector—earn the minimum wage, this will be an additional financial burden. Why isn't the state taking into account the situation of those earning the minimum wage? The draft in its current form is simply unacceptable."

Manaseryan also noted other gaps in the draft, including how medical institutions that can provide insurance services are selected:

"We need a law that excludes any corruption risks. If the foundation distributing the funds includes only government members, there must also be representatives from employers and trade unions to ensure full transparency. The scope of medical services is also problematic, especially for certain diseases. Will people face obstacles when choosing hospitals? These are problems that must be raised now so that they don't cause issues later on."

Tsaghik Vardanyan, co-founder of the NGO "Health and Rights" and a health policy expert, added that some flexibility has been introduced in terms of state participation:

"Previously, everyone had to pay 100% of the insurance fee, and only afterward certain groups would be reimbursed. Now the state will compensate a certain percentage upfront. Also, there's a bonus system: if someone only uses preventive medical check-ups and no other services throughout the year, they will receive a bonus. But there are some unclear aspects—for example, bonuses for those who adopt a healthy lifestyle, lose weight, or quit smoking. Primary care physicians could easily manipulate records. There are corruption risks—bonuses could be unfairly granted to certain people. Some funds will be available in a bonus pool, which could be used to reduce insurance payments or cover gym memberships. But doctors might falsely claim someone doesn't smoke or has no weight issues—and transfer the bonus to someone else. This needs to be reconsidered," Vardanyan concluded.

Սկզբնաղբյուր՝ Tert.am, <https://shorturl.at/z7ps0>

Comprehensive Health Insurance or Additional Tax? The Draft Law and Obstacles to Its Implementation

The draft of the “Law of the Republic of Armenia on Comprehensive Health Insurance”, which was recently circulated on the e-draft platform, is at first glance a long-awaited and necessary project, since it is common worldwide to have comprehensive health insurance, which should free citizens from the huge financial burden connected with health.

However, even after the amendments, the draft still contains problematic provisions, some of which I will discuss below. Employees will pay from 120,000 to 164,400 drams per year for health insurance, the amount of which will be revised every year, including taking into account the projected changes in the consumer price index, which, however, is never done when setting the minimum wage.

According to the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, in 2023 the poverty rate in the Republic of Armenia is 23.7%. Among the poor there are also working poor who, even having a job, are not able to provide for their minimum needs and those of their family members, since the minimum wage in the Republic of Armenia does not take into account the needs of the worker and his family. In the current socio-economic conditions, when taxes on public transport, garbage collection and property are increasing, health insurance contributions will become an additional burden for workers, which will negatively affect their income, especially for those workers who are already trying to cope with rising prices with minimal income, which does not follow from the requirement of Article 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, namely: “The Republic of Armenia is a sovereign, democratic, social and legal state.”

It is necessary to highlight the provision of legislative guarantees for social protection and well-being of people as the most important component of a social and legal state. The problem is that, according to the draft, the burden of paying contributions for compulsory health insurance is primarily imposed on the employee.

The draft law, in particular, mentions “hired workers” (the term “hired worker” is not included in the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia). The monthly calculation base for insurance premiums is the wages calculated by employers for individuals who are employees, and the annual calculation base is income received for the performance of work (provision of services) under civil law contracts, wages. In fairness, it should be noted that employees will pay: 1) 40% of the insurance premium if the established base for calculating the insurance premium is less than or equal to twice the minimum wage (in the case of receiving a salary of up to 150,000 drams), 2) 60% of the insurance premium if the established base for calculating the insurance premium is less than or equal to four times the minimum wage, but more than two times the minimum wage (in the case of receiving a salary of more than 150,000 drams, but less than 300,000 drams), 3) one hundred percent of the insurance premium if the established base for calculating the insurance premium is more than four times the minimum wage (in the case of receiving wages over 300,000 drams).

This means that each employee, however, will pay between 4,000 and 13,700 drams per month. Employers will not be required to distribute this amount or revise wages accordingly. Meanwhile, employees are exposed to various risks in the workplace that can affect their health. In a number of European countries, including Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and Switzerland, employers also make mandatory payments for employee health insurance.

Employers' participation in this system will help reduce the financial burden on employees and ensure social justice. In parallel with the reasonable and logical implementation of the system, this process should be accompanied by systemic reforms, including the law on wage indexation, as well as adequate and fair distribution of the burden of participation of employers, the state and employees. Otherwise, this is an additional tax for employees.

Elen Manaseryan
President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia

*Sources of the material: ORAGIR.NEWS, aravot.am:
<https://shorturl.at/bfLtq>, <https://www.aravot.am/2025/03/14/1475145/>*

Four-Day Training Course on Organizing Workers in the Informal Economy



The Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA), with the financial support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), organized a four-day training course on organizing workers in the informal economy. The event took place in the city of Tsaghkadzor from March 20 to 23, 2025, and was designed for trade unionists from CTUA-affiliated national branch trade union organizations.

The main course was conducted by Kristina Krupavičienė, President of the “Solidarumas” Confederation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Lithuania.

The training was also attended by Gocha Alexandria, Senior Workers’ Specialist for the ILO Eastern Europe and Central Asia region; Özge Berber, Specialist on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination from the ILO Office in Budapest; Nune Hovhannisyan, ILO National Coordinator; and Elen Manaseryan, President of the CTUA.

Tiruhuhi Nazaretyan, Vice-President of the CTUA, presented an overview of the informal economy in Armenia, current conditions, and existing challenges.

Participants were also introduced to the relevant national legislation, ILO Convention No. 189, and other international instruments regulating the field.

The CTUA President presented the current state of social partnership in Armenia, existing challenges, and recent achievements of the Confederation.

Through group work and role-play activities, participants developed organizing and communication skills and became acquainted with the experience of Lithuanian trade unions.

At the conclusion of the training, working groups presented their proposed strategies for future organizing efforts among domestic workers, as well as workers in the construction and agro-industrial sectors.

Visit of Swedish Partners to the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia

On March 31, the President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA), Elen Manaseryan, hosted Per Lindberg, Program Manager at the Swedish Public Employment Service; Karl-Martin Andersson, Head of the International Development Cooperation Division at the Swedish Migration Agency; Ellen Blank, Senior Digital Services Advisor; and Joakim Enger, Advisor. Karl-Martin Andersson expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and presented the details of the upcoming program to be implemented in cooperation with Armenia's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Unified Social Service.

He particularly emphasized the importance of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia's position on the expected outcomes of the program. Andersson also noted that the meeting with CTUA was the first in a series of planned meetings with social partners, highlighting the significance of social dialogue.

The meeting was also attended by Ara Ghahramanyan, Coordinator of the "Renaissance" Trade Union Organization for Displaced and Refugee Workers, who spoke about the main challenges faced by forcibly displaced persons from the Republic of Artsakh in integrating into the labor market, as well as the issues related to differences in professional qualifications.

President of CTUA, Elen Manaseryan, expressed her appreciation for the guests' commitment to improving working conditions for workers in Armenia. She welcomed the initiative and expressed hope that such meetings and joint efforts will contribute meaningfully to improving the working conditions of persons forcibly displaced from the Republic of Artsakh.





Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia

Address: Vazgen Sargsyan str. 26/3

Tel. +37410583682

E-mail: hamk@hamk.am

www.hamk.am