



INTERNATIONAL FREELANCE CONFERENCE

Copenhagen, 27-28 May 2019

Final declaration

Around 100 musicians and musicians' trade union delegates from 30 countries on all continents met in Copenhagen on May 27-28, 2019, to address some of the biggest challenges that confront freelance musicians, on the occasion of FIM's first International Freelance Conference.

Delegates and their unions shared best practices on how to organise and represent freelance musicians efficiently and provide adequate services to this category of professionals, which forms the vast majority of musicians globally.

They stressed the prime importance of ILO conventions and recalled that all workers, irrespective of their employment relationship, should benefit from the protection of these conventions in all countries where they have been ratified. That includes, in particular, conventions 87 (on Freedom of Association and the Protection of the Right to Organise Convention) and 98 (on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining).

With annual revenues of US\$2,250 billion, the cultural and creative industries account for 3 percent of global GDP and employ 30 million people (about 1 percent of the world's active population). These revenues exceed those of telecom services and employ more people than the car industry of Europe, Japan and the US combined.

The music industry was among the first to be confronted with the impact of digitisation, therefore also among the first to address the consumers' new expectations driven by an emerging online market. It forms an irreplaceable part of the citizens' daily life and represents a significant potential for growth and job creation.

Against this exciting backdrop however, musicians too often experience a much darker reality. Most of them are low-paid and have little or no access to decent jobs, social security or welfare benefits and may not even be allowed representation by a trade union.

Governments and employers of musicians should recognise the contribution of these workers to the economy and to society as a whole, including in terms of cultural diversity. They should make sure that competition law does not apply to freelance musicians and that the latter are never forced to declare themselves as small businesses or enterprises and are free to form unions and to bargain collectively.