

News: Support for Migrant Workers in Israel

Geneva, July 1 2010 (ACTAV INFO)

The protection of the rights of migrant workers in Israel was the main theme of a first seminar sponsored by the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) in Tel Aviv on June 27-28, 2010.

The seminar is a follow-up to the decision by the Histadrut (General Federation of Labour in Israel) to change its Constitution to allow migrant workers to join the organisation and enjoy full right as a member including to right to elect and be elected and to benefit from the protection of the organization.

The programme, attended by 30 leaders of regional worker councils, included presentation by Histadrut legal experts as well as by ACTRAV, with particular focus on ILO's Convention on Migrant Workers (97 and 143). Israel has ratified Convention 97. A follow-up seminar is planned during the autumn 2010. It is estimated that migrant workers represent 10 per cent of the labour force. Official source estimate the number as many of 100,000 undocumented migrant workers find themselves in an irregular situation and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

This Histadrut move to allow migrant workers was encouraged by the ITUC and ILO/ACTRAV. In a statement, the ITUC said: "it was a significant step towards ensuring an end to exploitation and helping ensure full respect of their rights at work".

For more details, contact:

Luc Demaret
ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)
Tel: 41 22 799 7233
Email: demaret@ilo.org