

EFJ Annual Meeting (AM)
The Hague, The Netherlands
11-12 May 2023

Urgent Motions submitted to the AM 2023

Urgent motions can be submitted until the opening of the AM and must be accepted with the approval of at least two-thirds of the voting delegates present. Motions at the Annual Meeting cannot deal with EFJ rules.

1. Motion of support for the journalists on strike at Groupe Moniteur / Infopro Digital

Tabled by SNJ-CGT (France)

Groupe Moniteur is a specialized press company for professionals in the construction, architecture, energy and local government sectors. It has about 350 employees, including about 100 journalists, and employs nearly 200 freelance journalists on a yearly basis.

For nearly three weeks, half of the editorial staff of “La Gazette des communes”, one of the flagship titles of Groupe Moniteur, has been on strike. More than twenty journalists paid by the article have refused to hand in their work since April 24. The main reason given is that Infopro Digital's management has unilaterally decided to give a 0% increase in freelance rates in 2023.

While France is facing, like other European countries, a significant inflation, and despite the repeated requests of the French government urging all companies that can to implement wage increases, the company's management decided to give minimal increases -below the national average- to a part of the full-time workers and nothing to the journalists paid by piecework, the most precarious.

Yet, as every year, the company is making juicy profits, especially from subscriptions, trade shows, webinars and other paid services provided to local authorities.

Profits amount to more than 30% per year and the title La Gazette des communes has won national circulation awards for three consecutive years.

In spite of this, the management of Infopro Digital, which has already distinguished itself by its brutal negotiation methods, has been condemned several times by the courts and has little regard for the health of its employees, has decided not to give any increase in income to some of its main employees, thus provoking one of the longest strikes in the history of the title, which was created in 1934.

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in The Hague on May 11 and 12, 2023, gives its full support to the striking journalists and to all employees of

Groupe Moniteur and all employees of Infopro Digital's subsidiaries who demonstrated to obtain better working conditions, as well as to all trade unions mobilized to defend these employees.

The EFJ AM calls on the Steering Committee to address the board of the company, as well as the competent authorities in order to :

- Stress that any company must respect the laws and the rights of employees, in particular the right to collective bargaining, fair and in good faith.
- To ask the Publisher to remunerate authors' rights, without impinging on a fair and equitable sharing of reprography and digital reproduction rights, and to open a negotiation in this sense as requested by an administrative commission of the Ministry of Culture in November 2022.
- Remind the major shareholder, the Towerbrook investment fund, that it must enforce its own responsible ownership statement, which states, among other things, that they "assist their portfolio companies in developing best practices in working conditions, including the health, safety and welfare of their employees, their compensation structures, and their compensation practices. »
- Reaffirm that, in accordance with French law, freelance journalists must be systematically included in the mandatory annual negotiations, and that it is intolerable that they are forced to mobilize every year to be taken into account.
- To bring all our solidarity and support to the journalists and workers of this company, because their struggle to defend their rights concerns all employees and all journalists, in France and in Europe.

2. On comprehensive insurance coverage for war journalists

Tabled by AVBB/AGJPB (Belgium)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), meeting in The Hague, The Netherlands, on 11-12 May 2023,

Given that

- more than 12,000 Ukrainian and foreign journalists have been accredited to cover the war, according to Reporters Without Borders;
- the list of journalists who are victims getting longer by the day according to the Safety of Journalists Platform of the Council of Europe;
- on 9 May 2023, journalist Arman Soldin was killed in a shelling attack near Chasiv Yar in eastern Ukraine. The 32- year- old was working for the news agency Agence France Presse (AFP).

Whereas

- insurance coverage for war correspondents is alleged to be either too expensive and / or inadequate;
- an undefined number of journalists – and above all freelance journalists not working exclusively for 1 medium - work without insurance in the Ukraine;
- we all benefit from qualitative first-hand news;
- press freedom goes hand in hand with journalists' safety.

The EFJ AM instructs the EFJ Steering Committee:

- to facilitate and urge affiliates to collect data on the national situation. How many journalists per country have been accredited to cover the war in the Ukraine? Do they have insurance offered by which insurance company & who pays the insurance premium. What is covered by the insurance, what are the exclusions?
- to seek cooperation with international partners to lobby for a more comprehensive insurance deal.
- to map other helping lines apart from insurance companies. Funds, public money, ...

3. On a growing threat to media freedom in Poland

Tabled by the Society of Journalists (Poland)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in the Hague, the Netherlands, on 11 – 12 May 2023

notes that on April 28, 2023 the head of the Polish electronic media regulator (The National Broadcasting Council – KRRiT) imposed an PLN 80,000 (Euro 18,000) fine TOK FM, a news radio station, for broadcasting an interview in which a journalist said that a new school text book approved by the authorities “at times read like a Hitlerjugend handbook”. According to the head of KRRiT this statement amounted to ‘hate speech’ which is banned by law. The radio station denies the charge and plans to appeal against the fine in court. The publishers of the text book have already removed criticized passages thus acknowledging that the criticism was justified.

Parliamentary elections are due this autumn in Poland and an accurate and impartial media is essential to enable voters to make an informed choice at the ballot box. The KRRiT should ensure that broadcasters, commercial and public, adhere to impartiality rules as laid down by Poland’s media law.

The last parliamentary elections in 2019 saw the state owned media disregard these impartiality regulations to such an extent that OSCE international election observers concluded that, despite efforts by independent broadcasters to provide some balance, media coverage during the election was seriously tilted to favour the ruling party. In 2023 political news and current affairs broadcasts by the state owned media again overtly favour the ruling party and there is no sign that this will change during the election campaign.

At the same time the KRRiT seem intent on putting pressure on independent broadcasters to tone down their reporting deemed hostile to the ruling party by signaling through such fines that their broadcast license renewals which are due in the near future could be adversely affected. For TOK FM radio – renewal falls due at the time of 2023 parliamentary election and for TVN, a television station owned by Warner Brothers, in early 2024.

Therefore the annual EFJ meeting in The Hague instructs the EFJ Steering Committee to call on Poland’s National Broadcasting Council:

- to revoke the TOK FM fine and to run the licensing process in an impartial and equitable manner, in accordance with the law;
- to work with Poland’s State Election Commission (PKW) to ensure that the election coverage by the state owned and commercial media is impartial, fair and accurate thus ensuring a free and fair election.

4. For the correct transposition and compliance with Directive 790/2019 in Spain.

Tabled by FSC-CCOO and FESMC-UGT (Spain)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, held in The Hague on 11 and 12 May,

After the blockage in the processing of the project for the transposition into Spanish law of Directive 790/2019, whose amendment period was opened in December 2021 and is extended week by week to prevent its processing and to prevent the correction of the errors of interpretation made by the Government when transposing the regulation by means of a royal decree in which neither authors, writers nor journalists were heard.

And after learning less than a week ago that the intention is for the bill to lapse with the legislature at the end of the year, making final a transposition of Directive 790/2019 that neither respects fair remuneration for authors nor provides mechanisms to ensure that the 'transparency triangle' is met.

EFJ AM urges the Spanish Government, and more specifically its Ministry of Culture, to unblock the processing of the draft law on authors' rights for journalists and compliance with the transparency triangle, which allows companies and authors to know the income generated by their work in the digital single market in order to be able to claim a 'fair share' of this income, as established by European legislation.

5. Defending the role of Public Service Media (PSM) in safeguarding freedom of expression and the right of citizens to free and accurate information

Tabled by FSC-CCOO and FESMC-UGT (Spain)

Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression" and this includes "freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

The defense of fundamental rights such as these has been for decades, and continues to be, one of the main missions entrusted to the publicly owned media. But the degradation and polarization of the political debate, as well as the weakening of public services promoted by certain political options and pressure groups with spurious interests, make the task more difficult every day. PSM outlets have recently become the target of campaigns whose sole aim is to erode the workforce and their working conditions, as well as to weaken their funding in order to impoverish the media ecosystem and eliminate a voice whose interests often do not coincide with the logic of the market and the interests of the private sector.

In the specific case of Spain, clear examples of this are the attacks suffered by the workers of regional operators such as Canal Sur in Andalusia or RTVG in Galicia, which are reminiscent of those perpetrated in the past against Telemadrid in Madrid (with hundreds of layoffs) or Canal 9 in the Valencian Community (with the closure of the company). A threat that, in general terms, looms over any PSM that is not capable of preserving its editorial

independence, always at the mercy of the changing political climate and government majorities.

Therefore, the Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists urges its Steering Committee to:

- Carry out the actions it deems appropriate to strengthen the role of PSM, specially in defense of fundamental rights in Europe, and denounce forcefully and unequivocally the violations that occur and the attacks against the working conditions of information professionals.
- Set up a follow-up group to monitor these types of situations and assess their impact both in the short and medium term for the democratic health of the countries concerned.
- Maintain regular contact with national and regional authorities in the places identified as most at risk, and provide coverage and support to affiliated unions fighting to prevent the aforementioned threats.

6. For the unblocking of the regulation on professional secrecy in Spain.

Tabled by FSC-CCOO and FESMC-UGT (Spain)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, held in The Hague on 11 and 12 May:

In view of the blockage of the regulation on professional secrecy, agreed with all EFJ member journalists' organisations in Spain, FSC-CCOO, FESP-UGT, FeSP and FAPE, which has been awaiting processing in the Congress of Deputies since last December 2022,

And after the meeting held between Government technicians and Spanish journalists' organisations last Friday, 5 May, to try to unblock the implementation of the Professional Secrecy Act, transforming the addendum to the transposition of the Whistleblowers Directive into a bill of the Socialist Parliamentary Group so that it can enter into force before the end of the current legislature,

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in The Hague on 11 and 12 May, taking into account the importance for the protection of journalists in any country to have a strong regulation on the protection of sources and professional secrecy,

AM urges the Steering Committee to send a letter to all the presidents of the parliamentary groups in the Spanish Congress to ask them to facilitate and support the passage of this law, which has generated so much consensus and which has been pending regulation for almost 45 years, despite being a fundamental right enshrined in the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

STATEMENTS

1. In support of the 'Miércoles Negros' for the unblocking of the State Agreement of Daily Press and the salary increase for the staff of the big newspapers

Tabled by FSC-CCOO and FESMC-UGT (Spain)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in The Hague on 11 and 12 May, shows its deepest solidarity with the thousands of information professionals who work in the daily press companies in Spain, and supports the 'Black Wednesday' campaign that workers in the sector have undertaken in the face of the companies' unwillingness to unblock the agreements of the major newspapers and the general Daily Press, despite the fact that the sector has had its wages frozen for more than a decade, when it has not reduced them.

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists deplores the precariousness of employment to which the large Spanish media groups have subjected their staff since 2008, with salaries that generate poor workers, since in many national, regional and provincial newspapers, salaries are precarious and, in some cases, have already fallen below the recently approved Minimum Interprofessional Wage (SMI), set at 1.080 euros gross, and are also understaffed, resulting in starving newsrooms with marathon working hours.

The European Federation of Journalists shows its unconditional support to the media workers in the mobilisations that, since 18 April, have been taking place every Wednesday, under the name 'Black Wednesdays'. They aim to make visible and denounce the job insecurity that the sector has been enduring in the face of the closed-mindedness and immobility of the employers, the Association of Media Information (AMI), and the large business groups such as Vocento, Prisa and Unidad Editorial, responsible for headlines as significant as ABC, El Mundo and El País.

2. In support of the new day of strike of the workers of the Galician Radio and Television Corporation, under the slogan "No more abuses"; to the 260 'Black Friday' of the Galician public radio and television, and to the struggle for a truthful, plural and quality public media

Tabled by FSC-CCOO and FESMC-UGT (Spain)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in The Hague on 11 and 12 May, expresses its deepest solidarity with the new day of strike called precisely this Friday, 12 May, categorically calling for an end to labour abuses in the company. It is in line with the protests that for more than four years, 260 weeks, have been carried out by the professionals of Radio Televisión de Galicia (RTVG) in defence of the Galician public media.

It demands respect for the principles that have inspired the programming of the Corporation since the birth of the autonomous broadcasting body 38 years ago. These include respect for freedom of expression, objectivity, truthfulness and impartiality of information and political, social and cultural pluralism; the separation between information and opinion, and the promotion and dissemination of Galician culture and language. This public service

mission is set out in Law 9/1984, which states the obligation to serve the widest possible audience, offering quality and maximum geographical, cultural and social coverage.

The EFJ Annual Meeting reminds the Government of the Autonomous Community of Galicia that public radio and television should be the guarantor of the right to information enshrined in the Spanish Constitution, as a fundamental and universal right, and urges it to comply with the Media Law passed in 2011 by the Galician Parliament and to stop retaliating against the workers of the corporation who are only defending a quality public radio and television.

Defending public media from manipulation and from the dismantling and cuts they are suffering across Europe is one of the EFJ's main concerns, which is why we support, endorse and want to join today here in The Hague the strike on 12 May calling for "NO MORE ABUSE" and the 260 'Black Friday' in defense of CRTVG.

3. Free Julian Assange

Tabled by SINOS (Serbia)

The Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Journalists, meeting in The Hague on 11 and 12 May, joins the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in calling on the US government to drop all charges against Julian Assange and allow him to return home to his wife and children.

We are gravely concerned about the impact of Assange's continued detention on media freedom and the rights of all journalists globally. We urge European governments to actively work to secure Julian Assange's release.

4. In support to end the impunity of crimes against journalists and targeting of journalists in Serbia

Tabled by NUNS, UNS and GS KUM Nezavisnost (Serbia)

Although the Republic of Serbia has undertaken some concrete steps, safety of the journalists has not improved, numerous attacks and threats on journalists are recorded continuously, and the existing protection mechanisms have not proven to be sufficiently effective and adequate.

The most important and effective mechanism was developed within the multisectoral Standing Working Group for Journalists' Safety, with a developed system of contact points for fast reporting and monitoring incidents against journalists, monitoring the procedures that have been initiated and reacting in case of irregularities.

Independent journalists and media are exposed to various types of pressures, targeting and smear campaigns from public officials and pro-government media, which often leads to harassment and serious threats by ordinary citizens, primarily through social networks.

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (IJAS) and Journalists Association of Serbia (JAS) recorded around 140 cases of attacks and pressures in 2022. In 2023 IJAS recorded 57 cases of attacks and pressures (11 verbal attacks, 6 physical attacks and 40 pressures).

According to the records of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, in 2022, 81 criminal reports were submitted to the public prosecutor's offices. In 26 cases a decision was made to dismiss the criminal complaint or an official note was issued stating that there is no basis for initiating criminal

proceedings. In 5 cases a guilty verdict was handed down, and in one case, the verdict was acquittal. Also, 6 cases are ongoing before the court. In 5 cases the perpetrators are unknown, and 40 cases are at some stage of proceedings before the prosecution.

Until the end of March 2023, Republic Public Prosecutor's Office recorded 14 new cases, out of which in 4 cases a decision was made to dismiss the criminal complaint or an official note was issued stating that there is no basis for initiating criminal proceedings, 10 cases are still in pre investigative procedure.

Finally, there are still no judicial epilogues in the cases of murder of journalists Milan Pantić, Dada Vujasinović and Slavko Ćuruvija. Despite the ten-year work of the Commission for Investigating Murders of Journalists and two first-instance verdicts of 100 years for the head of the secret police at the time in the case of the murder of Slavko Ćuruvija, the journalistic community is worried because of all the circumstances we live in.

This verdict should end the chain of impunity and justice should finally be served. If this does not happen, every hope for professional healthy journalism in Serbia will be killed.

In the case of journalist Milan Jovanović, whose house was devastated in an arson attack in 2018, trial has also not been completed. Conviction was handed down at first instance court for now.

The number of SLAPPs has been on the rise in the past couple of years. According to the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia data, in 2021 and 2022 there have been 40 lawsuits that can be characterized as SLAPPs.

The analysis of recorded cases shows that the target of SLAPPs are investigative media outlets and media that report critically about the work of public officials, businessmen, crime etc. The media are being exhausted by a large number of legal claims and the amounts requested as compensation, as well as by evidently unfounded claims.

Mainly, the claimants are public officials, politicians, businessmen, and companies.

The European Federation of Journalists meeting in its general assembly on May 11 and 12 in Hague calls on:

- Serbian judiciary to conduct prompt, impartial, thorough and effective investigations into all cases of murders, attacks, harassment and intimidation against journalists offline and online, ensuring no impunity for perpetrators;
- High representatives of the executive power, members of National Assembly and other state or local officials to stop with targeting and using of abusive narrative and thus provoking the smear campaigns against investigative and independent journalists and media;
- Decision makers to take all necessary measures so that the legal framework foresees the additional necessary safeguards to deal with obviously unfounded or abusive court proceedings against public participation;
- Judiciary to provide additional training for judges in order to build their knowledge and capacities in detecting and dealing with manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings against public participation.

5. **AFP double status: double injustice**

Tabled by CFDT-Journalistes, SNJ and SNJ-GGT (France)

First of all, we want to congratulate our Turkish colleagues from Istanbul and Ankara AFP local offices for their successful 9 days strike leading to enthusiastic and concrete results: 65% rising pay and other results show how united unions struggle can challenge and make change with inequality in our profession. BRAVO.

But the mobilization of colleagues in Turkey is a tree hiding the forest of inequalities: for decades, employees of AFP local offices have had fewer rights, fewer votes,

fewer recourse, because of the local labor law of each country where the office is registered.

Agency staff with local or regional status are often confronted with crisis situations and very difficult working conditions, but scattered in local offices around the world, they have little contact with representatives of the staff in France.

Under local contract, AFP employees do not depend on French law, they often have much lower salaries, fewer days off and less working health rules (in particular the limitation of night work).

These inequalities between contracts under French law and contracts with local status are not justified : those journalists have a very high level of education, and their professional skills and expériences are comparable to their colleagues under French law.

The most precarious are often those precious reporters on the frontline, as the death of our young colleague Arman Soldin killed this week in Ukraine reminds us. Without those frontline reporters, no AFP, no international news in many French media.

According to AFP management, 1,139 people are currently employed under local contracts worldwide and 1,229 under headquarters contracts. The diversity of situations depending on the country makes global mobilization complicated.

But it is essential that the agency begins to treat all its employees around the world with equality.

We conclude with a specific thought for Arman Soldin and his family. Arman was killed this week in Ukraine, he was 32 years old and was working as video coordinator for the AFP agency.

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1. Motion de soutien aux journalistes en grève du Groupe Moniteur / Infopro Digital

Déposée par le SNJ-CGT (France)

Le Groupe Moniteur est une entreprise de presse spécialisée destinée aux professionnels de la construction, de l'architecture, de l'énergie et des collectivités territoriales, elle compte environ 350 salariés, dont une centaine de journalistes, elle emploie également chaque année près de 200 journalistes à la pige, et c'est une filiale d'Infopro Digital, le plus grand acteur de la presse professionnelle en France et un des principaux acteurs en Europe.

Depuis près de trois semaines, la moitié de la rédaction de La Gazette des communes, un des titres phare du Groupe Moniteur, est en grève. Plus d'une vingtaine de journalistes rémunérés à l'article ont refusé de rendre leur travail depuis le 24 avril.

Principale raison invoquée : la direction d'Infopro Digital a décidé unilatéralement de donner 0% d'augmentation aux barèmes de piges en 2023.

Alors que la France fait face, comme d'autres pays d'Europe, à une importante inflation, et malgré les demandes répétées du gouvernement français exhortant toutes les entreprises qui le peuvent à mettre en place des augmentations salariales, la direction de l'entreprise a décidé d'attribuer des augmentations minimalistes -en dessous de la moyenne nationale- à une partie des travailleurs à temps plein et rien aux journalistes payés à la pièce, les plus précaires.

Pourtant, comme chaque année, l'entreprise obtient de juteux bénéfices, notamment grâce aux abonnements, salons, webinaires et autres services payants fournis aux collectivités territoriales.

Les bénéfices s'élèvent à plus de 30% par an et le titre La Gazette des communes a remporté des prix de diffusion nationale pendant trois années consécutives.

Malgré cela, la direction d'Infopro Digital, qui s'est déjà illustrée par ses méthodes de négociation brutales, plusieurs fois condamnée par la justice et peu attentive à la santé de ses salariés, a décidé de ne donner aucune augmentation des revenus à une partie de ses principaux collaborateurs, provoquant ainsi une des plus longues grèves de l'histoire du titre créé en 1934.

La Fédération européenne de journalistes, réunie en assemblée générale à La Haye les 11 et 12 mai 2023, apporte tout son soutien aux journalistes en grève et à tous les salariés du Groupe Moniteur et à tous les salariés des filiales d'Infopro Digital qui ont manifesté pour obtenir de meilleures conditions de travail, ainsi qu'à tous les syndicats mobilisés pour défendre ces salariés.

L'AG de la FEJ charge le comité directeur de s'adresser à la direction de l'entreprise, ainsi qu'aux autorités compétentes afin de :

- Souligner que toute entreprise doit respecter les lois et les droits de salariés, notamment le droit à la négociation collective, loyale et de bonne foi.
- Demander à l'Editeur de rétribuer les droits d'auteurs, sans que cela empiète sur un partage juste et équitable des droits de reprographie et reproduction numérique, et à ouvrir une négociation en ce sens comme cela a été demandé par une commission administrative du ministère de la Culture en novembre 2022.
- Rappeler à l'actionnaire principal, le fonds d'investissement Towerbrook, qu'il doit faire respecter sa propre déclaration de propriété responsable qui indique notamment qu'ils « aident les entreprises de leur portefeuille à développer les meilleures pratiques en matière de conditions de travail, y compris la santé, la sécurité et le bien-être de leurs employés, leurs structures de compensation et leurs pratiques de rémunération ».
- Réaffirmer que, conformément à la loi française, les journalistes pigistes doivent être systématiquement inclus dans les négociations annuelles obligatoires, et qu'il est intolérable que ceux-ci soient contraints de se mobiliser chaque année pour être pris en compte.
- Apporter toute notre solidarité et notre soutien aux journalistes et aux travailleurs de cette entreprise, car leur lutte pour défendre leurs droits concerne tous les salariés et tous les journalistes, en France et en Europe.

2. Sur la couverture d'assurance complète pour les journalistes de guerre *Déposée par AVBB/AGJPB (Belgique)*

La réunion annuelle de la Fédération européenne des journalistes (FEJ), qui se tiendra à La Haye, aux Pays-Bas, les 11 et 12 mai 2023,

Etant donné que:

- plus de 12 000 journalistes ukrainiens et étrangers ont été accrédités pour couvrir la guerre, selon Reporters sans frontières ;
- la liste des journalistes victimes s'allonge de jour en jour selon la Plate-forme pour la sécurité des journalistes du Conseil de l'Europe ;
- le 9 mai 2023, le journaliste Arman Soldin a été tué lors d'un bombardement près de Chasiv Yar, dans l'est de l'Ukraine. Ce jeune homme de 32 ans travaillait pour l'Agence France Presse (AFP).

Considérant que

- la couverture d'assurance pour les correspondants de guerre serait soit trop chère et/ou inadéquate ;
- un nombre indéterminé de journalistes - et surtout de journalistes indépendants ne travaillant pas exclusivement pour un média - travaillent sans assurance en Ukraine ;
- nous bénéficions tous d'informations de première main de qualité ;
- la liberté de la presse va de pair avec la sécurité des journalistes.

Le Comité Exécutif de la FEJ demande au Comité Directeur de la FEJ :

- de faciliter et d'encourager les affiliés à collecter des données sur la situation nationale. Combien de journalistes par pays ont été accrédités pour couvrir la guerre en Ukraine ? Ont-ils une assurance proposée par quelle compagnie d'assurance et qui paie la prime d'assurance ? Qu'est-ce qui est couvert par l'assurance, quelles sont les exclusions ?
- chercher à coopérer avec des partenaires internationaux pour faire pression en faveur d'un accord d'assurance plus complet.
- de répertorier les autres lignes d'aide en dehors des compagnies d'assurance. Fonds, argent public...