

# Director-General's announcement

IGDS Number 8 (Version 1)



International Labour Office

11 April 2008

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## ILO policy on public information disclosure

### Introduction

1. This announcement is issued under the authority granted to the Director-General by article 8 of the Constitution of the ILO.
2. The International Labour Office (ILO) is committed to openness and transparency in its operations, activities and decision-making processes. This public information disclosure policy of the ILO is designed to ensure that information concerning ILO policies, strategies and operational activities is available to the widest possible audience. This policy is an important component of the overall commitment of the ILO to transparency and accountability vis-à-vis governments, and employers' and workers' organizations, partners in the UN system, the development community and the wider public. It also constitutes a key element of the knowledge-sharing strategy of the ILO.
3. This announcement is effective on the date of issue.

### Scope

4. A large number of ILO documents are available on the ILO public web site as a matter of course. These include Governing Body documents (other than those related to private sittings), documents for International Labour Conferences, the ILO Constitution and Standing Orders, a Compendium of Rules Applicable to the Governing Body, the Financial Regulations and Rules, as well as a wide range of technical working papers and ILO publications.
5. The ILO's Global Information Network is a key mechanism in the implementation of this public information disclosure policy as it ensures the delivery of high-quality information to governments, employers' and workers' organizations and external users of ILO information. One of the main objectives of the Global Information Network is to make ILO knowledge easier to access from outside the ILO. The ILO's assets are its knowledge and expertise and the Office is committed to making access to them as easy as possible. The Office also recognizes that timely access to accurate and up to date information is fundamental to promoting the ILO's overall policy of making Decent Work for All a global goal and a national reality.
6. The ILO public information disclosure policy is based on a ***presumption in favour of public disclosure*** of information and documents generated by the ILO. However, this general presumption is subject to specific exceptions as set down in

paragraph 7 below. These exceptions are limited to what is essential to protect the privacy of individuals and third parties, legal privilege, contractual, proprietary or commercial information and internal governance matters.

## Public access to ILO documents

7. Below is a list of the main types of ILO information available to the public which can normally be accessed through the ILO public web page, the ILO publications office and libraries. Some publications and documents may only be made available on a cost-recovery basis, particularly when the request is from for-profit organizations.
  - General information about the role and function of the ILO
  - International Labour Conference documents
  - Governing Body documents
  - Basic and regulatory texts
  - Agreements concluded between the ILO and intergovernmental organizations under article 12 of the ILO Constitution
  - Programme and budget documents
  - Audited financial statements
  - Reports of the External Auditor
  - Decent Work Country Programmes
  - Reports of Regional Meetings
  - Reports of Sectoral Committee meetings
  - Press statements
  - Technical working papers
  - Selected internal governance documents
  - Archives (subject to 30- and 50-year access rules)

## Exceptions

8. There is no public access to ILO documents that fall under one of the following categories:
  - Personal, medical, safety, security or employment-related information concerning staff
  - Documents covered by legal privilege (e.g. documents relating to proceedings before a tribunal or court)
  - Contractual documents, including technical cooperation documents, and personal and financial information provided by contractors
  - Documents containing commercial or proprietary information

- Documents exchanged with member States, workers' or employers' organizations or other organizations or parties under an expectation of confidentiality
  - Internal reports and draft documents, mission reports, correspondence, including email, among ILO staff
  - Documents related to representations under article 24 of the Constitution, unless the Governing Body decides to publish them
  - Documents related to internal bodies
  - Internal audit reports and investigations. However, summarized information relating to these may be contained in Governing Body documents or otherwise available on the public web site
  - Any other documents, which because of their content or the circumstances surrounding their creation or use, are deemed to be confidential in the interests of the Organization or third parties
9. In addition, vexatious or malicious requests may be denied.

### **Procedures for requesting documents**

10. Requests for documents, other than those that are publicly available on the ILO web page or from the ILO publications office or libraries, should be addressed to the **Communications and Files Section of the ILO**. The request should normally be responded to within 30 days. If the request is denied, a reply will be sent giving the reasons why the request is being denied. If the request is from a for-profit organization, an estimate of the cost of meeting the request will be provided normally within 30 days.

Requests for documents should be addressed to:

The Communications and Files Section,  
International Labour Office,  
4, route des Morillons,  
CH-1211 Geneva 22,  
Switzerland.

**Email:** [DOSCOM@ilo.org](mailto:DOSCOM@ilo.org)

**Tel:** +41 22 799 8106

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