

Article 19: discrimination, workers with family responsibilities, and maternity protection (GB 341- LILS/2)

IMEC Statement

1. IMEC thanks the Office for preparing and facilitating the process for finalizing this Article 19 report concerning non-discrimination, family responsibilities, and maternity protection. We also appreciate the social partners' engagement and efforts in achieving compromise on this important topic.
2. As IMEC has previously expressed, concise, focused questionnaires help ensure that we can provide answers that are accurate, clear, and responsive to the issues. In this spirit, IMEC submitted several proposals which were constructively endorsed by all constituents.
3. We appreciate the Office's efforts to take into account the various views expressed at previous Governing Bodies, including with respect to hosting consultations and making available a virtual platform for submitting written comments. We believe that this facilitated our discussions and helped us to reach agreement.
4. At the same time, IMEC has several suggestions that aim to further improve the process for finalizing Article 19 questionnaires. In particular, we consider that it would be helpful if the Office organized an informal consultation prior to the start of the March 2022 Governing Body in order to exchange preliminary views. Additionally, the consultation could include a tutorial by the Office about how to navigate the virtual platform with the view to ensuring effectiveness, transparency and inclusiveness of this innovative tool. It is our strong view that this could help avoid some of the challenges that we experienced this time, and make for a smoother process for finalizing future questionnaires.
5. We hope that the Office and social partners will take this suggestion on board, and we are open to discussions on how to further improve this process.
6. Again, IMEC thanks the Office and the social partners for the spirit of compromise shown throughout this process. Thank you.