



Tenth European Regional Meeting

Istanbul, Turkey, 2–5 October 2017

ERM.10/D.10

The Istanbul Initiative for the Centenary: Future for Decent Work for strong and responsible social partnership in Europe and Central Asia

The context

The 2013 Oslo Declaration called for positive pathways to overcome the negative economic, social and political consequences of the crisis and to restore confidence in jobs and growth. The promotion of strong and responsible social partnership in order to have social dialogue at all levels was a crucial element of the Declaration.

The situation has changed since then, with encouraging signs of recovery. However, a number of existing and emerging challenges, including lack of respect for social rights in certain countries, need to be addressed. Dynamic processes driven by rapid technological advances, including through the digital economy, impact the organization of work. Globalization, demographic trends, large movements of refugees and migrants, and environmental challenges are also shaping our future of work.

Work remains central to people's lives. We should protect people by facilitating their transition into new employment, when needed, while guaranteeing decent work.

Strong, sustainable growth and decent jobs for all are key for society as reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides a global framework to achieve all its 17 Goals. The achievement of universal ratification in the region of all eight fundamental ILO Conventions is a significant step towards meeting these Goals, which have to be implemented in practice.

Just two years before the centenary of the ILO, under the topic of the Future of Work, the Tenth European Regional Meeting discussed decent jobs for all, work and society, governance of work, the promotion and implementation of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, as well as fair and effective access to labour markets for migrants and refugees.

The ILO is the only international organization that has the unique tripartite structure and we cannot function properly when a considerable number of tripartite delegations are incomplete. The exceptional situation of the Tenth European Regional Meeting should not set a precedent, in order to avoid consequences for the capacity to deliver a balanced and mutually beneficial outcome.

Policy expectations

In accordance with the Declaration of Philadelphia, labour is not a commodity and Members have the obligation to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work. Their implementation in law and practice, as well as the ILO's supervisory system, are essential in this regard.

The Tenth European Regional Meeting reiterates the need to “promote strong and responsible social partnership in order to have social dialogue at all levels which contributes to equitable distribution, social progress and stability based on productivity-oriented wage policies”.

The drivers of change that impact the future of work, in particular technological developments, provide a myriad of opportunities but also present considerable challenges.

Comprehensive policy frameworks to reap the benefits and minimize the risks relating to the future of work should include:

- sound macroeconomic, fiscal and sectoral policies for inclusive growth and employment;
- policies to promote an enabling environment for enterprise creation, sustainable enterprises and innovative businesses;
- education, skills development and lifelong learning policies;
- labour market, wage and social protection policies to promote decent work and ensure the protection of labour rights;
- policies for a fair transition towards new forms of production and employment relationships, digitalization and automation;
- policies to improve gender equality;
- sustainable policies to enhance participation of women, youth and disadvantaged groups in the labour market;
- policies to promote labour market integration of migrants and refugees;
- policies to strengthen freedom of association, collective bargaining, non-discrimination and effective elimination of child and forced labour;
- policies to modernize labour market frameworks with more efficient regulations;
- policies to facilitate the transition to formality;
- policies to enhance the care and green economy;
- measures to strengthen labour administration and enforcement systems among other means, through labour inspection, to improve working conditions, including occupational safety and health.

All these policies need to be based on robust social dialogue.

Reforms are needed to ensure that countries of the region translate recovery into strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and employment, enhanced competitiveness and rights at work.

ILO means of action

In line with the 2008 Social Justice Declaration, the Office should assist its constituents by providing adequate and balanced information and research and by supporting the design of innovative social and economic policies.

In order to seize the opportunities and address the challenges relating to the future of work, the Office should:

- provide up-to-date information, collect rigorous data and conduct research on:
 - labour market trends, including data and estimates on employment growth and trends on employment forms;
 - skills, competencies and qualifications for the future and on the involvement of social partners in education and training programmes that respond to labour market requirements;
 - current and future trends in working conditions, including working time;
- evaluate issues and mechanisms including, but not limited to, forms of work, lifelong learning and social protection systems through which enterprises and workers can enhance their capacity to adapt to the changing world of work;
- promote the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work and robust social dialogue in the context of the changing world of work;
- support capacity building to promote strong, representative and independent employers' and workers' organizations;
- expand activities to help member States develop policies that address skills mismatches when required;
- assist in the promotion of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises;
- provide assistance, upon request, to ILO constituents to develop concrete programmes and plans of action that are based on the outcomes of the Future of Work Initiative;
- continue to support constituents to improve the supervision, implementation, effectiveness, transparency, tripartite governance and ownership of ILO standards, through the Standards Centenary Initiative;
- continue systematically to engage tripartite constituents in planning ILO activities, programmes and projects, thus ensuring transparency, tripartite governance and ownership of results achieved;
- assist constituents, upon request, in the implementation of international labour standards and in strengthening labour administration and inspection systems;
- promote the implementation of the revised Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy;
- promote synergies and policy coherence within the United Nations system and with other international organizations, particularly the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, regional organizations, institutions and forums, the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union, the Council of Europe and with the G20, on economic and social policies to promote rights at work and to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.