



Governing Body

340th Session, Geneva, October–November 2020

Institutional Section

INS

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Twenty-first item on the agenda

Composition, agenda and programme of standing bodies and meetings

Addendum

1. At its 340th Session (October–November 2020), the Governing Body approved by correspondence the programme of several official meetings in 2021 and requested the Office to keep the situation under regular review in consultation with the tripartite constituents so as to implement the programme of official meetings according to the evolving circumstances of the pandemic.¹
2. Following consultations with the tripartite constituents in late November and early December, and taking into consideration the need to ensure business continuity during the prevalence of the pandemic as well as the number of meetings already scheduled during the first half of 2021, the tripartite Screening Group recommends to the Governing Body that it approves by correspondence the holding of at least two of the technical meetings of the sectoral programme postponed from 2020 before the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2021, namely the Technical meeting on the future of work in the automotive industry and the Technical meeting on the future of work in the education sector in the context of lifelong learning for all, skills and the Decent Work Agenda.

¹ GB.340/INS/21.

3. The Governing Body already approved the title, purpose, composition and invited observers of these two meetings in November 2019 and March 2020.²
4. Appendix I contains the programme of all official meetings for 2021 with an indication of the exact dates where these have been agreed, or the approximate period in 2021 during which other official meetings could be organized. The Office will convene tripartite consultations during the first quarter of 2021 to consider the format and times at which those other meetings listed in the programme for 2021 could be held.
5. The tripartite Screening Group further recommends to the Governing Body that it approve a set of special arrangements, contained in Appendix II, to facilitate the conduct of any of the technical meetings or meetings of experts by virtual means, including the Special Tripartite Committee of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC,2006), and the Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers of the Joint Maritime Commission.
6. The Governing Body, through delegated authority, decided, on 18 January 2021, to convene the Technical meeting on the future of work in the automotive industry from 15 to 19 February 2021.

▶ Draft decision

7. **The Governing Body decided by correspondence:**
 - (a) **to convene the Technical meeting on the future of work in the education sector in the context of lifelong learning for all, skills and the Decent Work Agenda from 17 to 21 May 2021; and**
 - (b) **to approve the special arrangements for the programme of official meetings in 2021 contained in Appendix II to document GB.340/INS/21(Add. 1).**

² GB.337/POL/2, GB.337/INS/14 and GB.338/INS/17(Rev.1).

► Appendix I

Programme of ILO official meetings in 2021 (subject to regular review depending on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic)

Date	Title of meeting	Place
13–15 January	Sectoral Advisory Bodies	Virtual
Week of 18 January	Second meeting of the Working Group on full, equal and democratic participation in the ILO's tripartite governance	Virtual
15–19 February	Technical meeting on the future of work in the automotive industry (originally scheduled for 4–8 May 2020)	Virtual
8–12 March	Committee on Freedom of Association (341st Session of the Governing Body)	Geneva
15–27 March	341st Session of the Governing Body	Virtual
19–23 April ¹	Fourth meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended	Virtual
26–27 April	Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers of the Joint Maritime Commission	Virtual
17–21 May	Technical meeting on the future of work in the education sector in the context of lifelong learning for all, skills and the Decent Work Agenda (originally scheduled for 12–16 October 2020; then 25–29 January 2021)	Virtual
3–4 June	Committee on Freedom of Association (342nd Session of the Governing Body)	Geneva
7 June	341bis Session of the Governing Body	Geneva
7–18 June ²	109th Session of the International Labour Conference	Geneva
19 June	342nd Session of the Governing Body	Geneva
21–25 June (to be confirmed)	Meeting of experts to discuss and adopt a code of practice on safety and health in textiles, clothing, leather and footwear	Geneva
Third quarter	Technical meeting on the impact of digitalization in the finance sector (originally scheduled for 22–26 February 2021)	Geneva

¹ Further to the [decision](#) adopted by the Governing Body at its 334th Session (October–November 2018) (GB.334/LILS/2(Rev.)). The Office proposes to follow the recommendation made by the STC Officers in September 2020 that the meeting be organized in two phases: Phase 1 general virtual discussion focused on the impact of COVID in the maritime sector (19–23 April) and Phase 2 face-to-face meeting (27–29 September) to enable proper consideration of proposed amendments to the code of the MLC, 2006, triggered by the COVID-19 crisis. The tentative dates are proposed by the officers of the STC and subject to confirmation by the Governing Body.

² Further to the [decision](#) made by the Governing Body on 3 April 2020 through a vote by correspondence, the 109th Session, which was originally scheduled on 25 May–5 June 2020, was deferred to 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The dates are tentative, subject to confirmation.

Date	Title of meeting	Place
Third quarter	Technical meeting on the future of decent and sustainable work in urban transport services (originally scheduled for 21–25 September 2020)	Geneva
13–17 September ³	Sixth Meeting of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group	Geneva
27–29 September ¹	Follow-up to the fourth meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended	Geneva
4–8 October	Joint ILO–UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART)	Virtual
28–30 October	Committee on Freedom of Association (343rd Session of the Governing Body)	Geneva
1–11 November	343rd Session of the Governing Body	Geneva
24 November–11 December	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations	Geneva
Fourth quarter	Meeting of experts to revise the 1992 code of practice on safety and health in construction	Geneva
Fourth quarter	Technical meeting on the future of work in aquaculture in the context of the rural economy (originally scheduled for 23–27 November 2020)	Geneva
Fourth quarter	Additional sectoral meeting (subject to confirmation)	Geneva
Fourth quarter	Workers' symposium	Geneva
To be confirmed	17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (originally scheduled for 6–9 April 2021)	Singapore
To be confirmed	11th European Regional Meeting (to take place after the Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting)	
To be confirmed	Meeting to validate technical guidelines on labour inspection	Geneva
To be confirmed	Meeting to validate technical guidelines on biological hazards	Geneva
Postponed to 2022–23	Meeting of experts to produce joint ILO–IMO guidelines for medical examination of fishers (originally scheduled for the third quarter of 2021)	Geneva

³ Further to the [decision](#) adopted by the Governing Body at its [337th Session](#) (October–November 2019) ([GB.337/LILS/1](#)). Initially scheduled on 14–18 September 2020, the Governing Body [decided by correspondence](#) to change the dates of this meeting due to scheduling delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The tentative dates are proposed by the Officers of the SRM TWG and subject to confirmation by the Governing Body.

► Appendix II

Special arrangements for the programme of official meetings in 2021

1. Due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, the Screening Group of the Governing Body has been requested on several occasions to adjust the programme of official meetings, including sectoral meetings.
2. The evolution of the pandemic remains uncertain and the possibility of holding fully in-person meetings in the coming months under reasonable conditions of safety and security for all participants seems unlikely.
3. The Governing Body, at its 340th Session (November 2020) decided by correspondence to continue preparatory work for the programme of official meetings, listed in the first part of the appendix to document [GB.340/INS/21](#). It further requested the Office to convene tripartite consultations on practical ways to implement the remaining part of the programme of official meetings 2021, listed in the second part of the document.
4. In its deliberations, tripartite constituents are invited to consider that a deferral of a meeting listed in the second part of the document to the biennium 2022–23, would require a Governing Body decision for the funds to be carried forward into the next biennium.
5. This paper sets out possible arrangements to convene these meetings through full or partial remote participation.

Legal basis for virtual meetings

6. There are no provisions in the [Standing Orders for technical meetings and Standing Orders for meetings of experts](#), or in other Standing Orders, which can be construed as preventing meetings to be held virtually.
7. The Governing Body may suspend the application of all or part of the provisions of the Standing Orders or modify them.¹ Also, the Governing Body, in determining the place of the meeting, can decide that the meeting is to be held virtually. In view of the exceptional circumstances, which prevent a normal face-to-face meeting, the Standing Orders cannot be interpreted as requiring the holding of in-person meetings only.
8. Decisions on the date, length and place of the meeting would have to be taken by the Governing Body, either by the Officers of the Governing Body under delegated authority or by correspondence.
9. Finally, it should be noted that physical meetings will be resumed as soon as this is possible under reasonable conditions of safety and security for all participants.

¹ This is expressly provided for in article 1(2) of the Standing Orders for technical meetings and those for meetings of experts. For other Standing Orders, this follows generally from the power of the Governing Body to set up and convene the respective bodies and to adopt their Standing Orders.

The need for adjustments and special arrangements

10. In view of the fact that remote group interaction represents a number of challenges, the virtual conduct of meetings require a rigorous approach, efficient time management, and some adjustments to the regular working methods.
11. Accordingly, these special arrangements seek to adapt traditional parliamentary practices of face-to-face debate and negotiation to the constraints associated with the virtual medium. These arrangements also address aspects of the meetings not expressly covered by any provision of the Standing Orders. Consideration could thus be given to introducing strict speaking time limits, specific deadlines for the submission of amendments, decision-making methods, etc.
12. These special arrangements have been elaborated to that end and shall take precedence over the Standing Orders for technical meetings and meetings of experts and their Introductory note in any instance of inconsistency between the two.

Special arrangements and rules of procedure applicable to the virtual conduct of meetings

13. The Standing Orders applicable to the meeting concerned shall continue to apply in full except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these special arrangements. In these cases, the Governing Body's decision to adopt these arrangements shall be deemed as a decision to suspend the relevant provisions of the Standing Orders for any meeting under the 2020–21 programme to be held fully or partially by virtual means.
14. Given the novel and untested character of these arrangements and rules, should the need arise, the meetings may, on the recommendation of their Officers² in consultation with the Government group regional coordinators, further specify them, adapt them to each different type of meeting and modify them within the limits set by the applicable Standing Orders.

Accreditation

15. Accreditation to the meeting shall follow normal practice. However, in view of the maximum capacity of 500 participants in the virtual platform that will be used for plenary sittings of the meetings, the maximum number of participants in the following categories who will be given access to the platform may have to be limited:
 - (a) advisers to Government, Employer or Worker representatives³ (except in the case of technical meetings and meetings of experts, where their number is already limited under the Standing Orders to one per representative);
 - (b) representatives of observer governments⁴ (except in the case of meetings of experts, where their number is already limited under the Standing Orders to one per government);
 - (c) Employers' and Workers' groups' observers (at technical meetings);

² Efforts should be made to nominate the Officers of meetings well in advance of the first Officers' meeting to allow for effective coordination.

³ For the purpose of this document, the term "employers" includes shipowners and the term "workers" includes seafarers.

⁴ Including governments of Members, which have not yet ratified the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (article 9(2) of the Standing Orders of the Special Tripartite Committee).

- (d) representatives of invited official international organizations;
 - (e) representatives of invited non-governmental international organizations.
16. The Office will establish the limits applicable to the above categories specifically for each meeting depending on the attendance expected.
 17. Regarding group meetings (Employers', Workers' and Government groups), the virtual platform also permits a maximum of 500 participants in each group. Unless any particular group considers it necessary to establish restrictions, all persons accredited to the session by the groups will be granted access to participate remotely in the meetings of their respective groups.
 18. Credentials of participants should reach the secretariat no later than one week before the opening plenary, so the secretariat can send the relevant access codes to each accredited participant.
 19. To enable secured access to join the session remotely through the relevant virtual platform, the provision of an individual email address will be required upon submission of the credentials of the representative, experts, as well as advisers and observers. The same email address will be used throughout the session to announce the programme and transmit documents.

Attendance

Physical attendance

20. Where safety and security conditions make it possible for some participants, who so wish, to follow the meeting in person at the ILO, the tripartite Screening Group of the Governing Body shall determine the maximum number of participants with access to the ILO meeting rooms during the meeting.
21. In determining these numbers, account has been taken of the recommended physical distancing in meeting rooms and conference area, the important need to ensure a reasonable balance between the three constituent groups, and the different impact of travel restrictions on the Employers' and Workers' groups with no resident representatives in Geneva.

Remote attendance

22. Except for any participants authorized to be present in ILO meeting rooms in accordance with the previous section, participants shall join the plenary sittings and group meetings remotely through a closed virtual platform. These participants will be able to listen to other speakers and address the meeting in the three official languages of the ILO (English, French, and Spanish) and to communicate in writing with the Clerk and individual participants, through the chat function in the platform. Interpretation in the working languages of the Office (Arabic, Chinese, German, and Russian) can also be arranged at the request of the groups, within a specified period.
23. Group meetings are private and therefore only accessible remotely to those participants authorized by each group. Authorized participants will be able to take the floor and listen to other participants in the official ILO languages, and to interact through the chat.
24. Separate access codes or links will be required to attend public sittings of the plenaries, sittings of subsidiary bodies, and any private sitting and group meetings through the closed platform specific to each of these three meeting types. Individual access codes or links will be communicated separately to each participant according to their attendance

rights and will be valid for the duration of the meeting. It is the responsibility of each registered participant to keep their access code secret and to abstain from sharing it with any other person, even within the same delegation.

Programme

25. To ensure the most equitable participation possible for participants from different time zones, all plenary sittings will be organized with a duration of three hours each between 1.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., Geneva time, the starting time alternating by day between 1.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. A maximum of four (4) plenary sittings and two (2) sittings (extended if required) of subsidiary bodies will be scheduled for technical meetings and ten (10) for meetings of experts. A tentative order of business shall be available at least one month prior to the opening plenary.
26. Facilities will be made available for groups to hold group meetings of one hour and a half before the plenary sittings mentioned above.
27. Group meetings and plenary sittings will be announced through the meeting website. Information on plenary sittings will include the items (points for discussion/chapters) scheduled for discussion with links to relevant documents, as well as any applicable time limit for group and individual interventions.

Conduct of debates

Time management

28. In view of the proposed shorter time allotted to plenary sittings, and the need to make the best use of the time available, the following principles shall apply:
 - to the extent possible, positions should be expressed through group statements;
 - except at meetings of experts, individual statements should, to the extent possible, be limited to situations where they differ from the group to which the member belongs or where they add a perspective not covered by the group statement;
 - time limits for group and individual statements, determined by the Officers after consulting the Government group regional coordinators, will be strictly enforced;
 - interruption of sittings for negotiations should be avoided. These should take place outside of the hours reserved for the sittings.

Chairing of the sittings

29. The Chairperson shall preside over the sittings, whether attending physically or remotely. The Standing Orders applicable to the meeting concerned shall continue to apply.

Adoption of decisions

30. Decisions shall be taken by consensus, except where under the applicable Standing Orders a decision can only be taken by a record vote.⁵ Representatives or experts

⁵ Namely the adoption of amendments to the Code of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006) in accordance with Article XV of the MLC, 2006 (article 13(5) of the Standing Orders of the Special Tripartite Committee).

shall make every effort to reach an agreement that is generally accepted, so that a decision can be adopted without formal objections. In such cases, any dissenting positions or reservations shall be placed on the record without constituting an impediment to the adoption of the decision in question.