

## NEWSLETTER

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### Historic adoption of ILO Convention on Domestic Workers



At the 100<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference (ILC), the government, worker and employer delegates adopted on 16 June 2011 by a very large majority a historic set of international labour standards aimed at improving the working conditions of approximately 100 million domestic workers worldwide. Conference delegates adopted the [Convention on Domestic Workers \(2011\)](#) by a vote of 396 to 16, with 63 abstentions and the accompanying [Recommendation](#) by a vote of 434 to 8, with 42 abstentions.

The new standards set out that domestic workers around the world who care for families and households, must have the same basic labour rights as those available to other workers such as: reasonable hours of work, weekly rest of at least 24 consecutive hours, a limit on in-kind payment, clear information on terms and conditions of employment, respect for fundamental principles and rights at work including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

The EU has been firmly involved in the negotiations through the EU coordination within the ILC. The European Parliament adopted in May 2011, before the start of the final discussions at the ILC, a [Resolution](#) calling on the EU and the EU Member states to support the adoption, ratification and implementation of the Convention supplemented by a Recommendation. Many developing countries have announced at the ILC



that they will take action towards the ratification and application of the new instruments.

### **Very strong support from European Parliament for the ILO**

In recent weeks, the European Parliament (EP) showed strong support for the ILO and its work, at the initiative of different EP committees such as employment and social affairs, development and international trade.

At the June 2011 Plenary Session, the EP adopted a [Resolution on the external dimension of social policy, promoting labour and social standards and European corporate social responsibility](#). The Resolution supports decent work through EU internal and external policies and includes demands for concrete actions such as making the elimination of child labour a priority, supporting ratification and application of core labour standards and other up to date conventions, the implementation of decent work country programmes and national social protection floors as well as social dialogue in partner countries. The text also calls for promoting Corporate Social Responsibility in external policies including by linking it to broader decent work initiatives, such as the ILO [Better Work](#) and [SCORE](#) programmes.

The Development Committee of the European Parliament (DEVE) adopted on 25 May a [Report on increasing the impact of EU development policy](#), which will be voted at the July Plenary Session. In the document, Rapporteur Filip Kaczmarek, Member of the European Parliament, outlines support for the ILO Decent Work Agenda, the ILO Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor.

On 15 June 2011, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) adopted the [Opinion on](#)

[facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities](#) of Mrs Pervenche Berès, Chair of the employment and social affairs committee. The Opinion calls on the EU to promote the ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health (ILO-OSH 2001) across the oil and gas industry.

ILO Brussels recognizes the important value of this dynamic parliamentary work.

### **ILC agrees on new steps towards social protection floors**



The ILC reached global consensus amongst the tripartite constituents of its 183 member states on [guidance for extending social protection coverage](#). This discussion is part of the follow-up to the 2008 [ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization](#) that formalised the Decent Work Agenda. The ILC agreed also to schedule at the 2012 ILC the adoption of an ILO Recommendation on Social Protection Floors. The Ambassador of Luxembourg to the UN, Mr Feyder, very skilfully chaired the complex global negotiations. The World Bank, IMF, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women and the International Social Security Association supported the Social Protection Floor at the ILC.

The EU was very much involved in the discussion through the EU coordination at the ILC. Social protection will also be on the agenda of the 2011 G20. The employers have explicitly called on the G20 to take account of the ILC conclusions, support the 2012 ILC discussions on a Recommendation, support the ILO activities on

the Social Protection Floor, involve social partners at international level and encourage countries to involve their social partners.

### Other outcomes of the ILC



The International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted conclusions and guidance on [effective labour administration and labour inspection systems](#). The ILC also examined [25 individual cases](#) covering both industrialised and developing countries on the application of conventions. The ILC considered it appropriate to draw the attention, through a special ILC paragraph, to the significant lack of application by Uzbekistan of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), by Guatemala, Myanmar and Swaziland of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87) and by the Democratic Republic of Congo of the Forced Labour Convention (No. 29).

### ILC conclusions on child labour in Uzbekistan



At the request of the International Trade Committee of the European parliament (EP), the ILO briefly introduced on 21 June 2011 the conclusions of the ILC committee on the application of conventions in relation to the worst

forms of child labour in the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan as included in a special ILC paragraph.

The ILC reiterated its request for a high level tripartite mission to Uzbekistan in order to observe the cotton harvest. The ILC also requested a commitment from Uzbekistan for engaging with ILO-IPEC (Programme for the elimination of child labour) and suggested technical cooperation.

### Mr Assane Diop (ILO) debated on 'Helping Africa to defeat social odds'



At the international summit 'Africa: Building on growth' co-organised by the Development Policy Forum and led by [Friends of Europe](#) on 27 and 28 June 2011 in Brussels, Mr Assane Diop, Executive Director for Social Protection of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), debated on the subject "Helping Africa to defeat social odds". Mr Diop highlighted the need for more comprehensive education and vocational training systems as well as health systems that are part of national social protection. He also presented the relevance of social protection floors for Africa to achieve inclusive and long-lasting economic growth.

Today, African governments, social partners and civil society are taking steps towards increased social security systems and social measures for the most vulnerable population.

### **Conference on Fundamental Social Rights and the Posting of Workers in the Framework of the Single Market**

On 27 and 28 June, the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission (DG EMPL) organised a large consultative conference on fundamental social rights and the posting of workers in the framework of the single market. The Conference discussed the exercise of fundamental social rights in cross-border situations and the [Posting of Workers Directive 96/71](#). EU Commissioner Andor presented his suggestions for adapting the EU legal framework in order to clarify the relation between fundamental social rights and the freedom to provide services and the freedom of establishment, as well as for improving the effective implementation and enforcement of the posting of workers directive.

The Deputy Director of the ILO International Labour Standards Department, Mrs Karen Curtis, participated at the key plenary panel on 27 June. The ILO Office also contributed to the panel on stronger cooperation between national labour administrations. The ILO Office highlighted e.g. the importance of clarifying the relation between fundamental social rights and the EU internal market and the need for ensuring policy coherence. The current situation is not satisfactory as the ILO supervisory system is confronted with observations and complaints related to some EU Member states due to the above mentioned lack of clarification.

### **EU Communication ‘Rio+20: towards the green economy and better governance’**

The ILO Brussels office welcomes the [Rio+20 Communication](#) of the Commission which was published on 20 June. In this document, the

Commission outlines its position for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development taking place in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro. In the Communication the Commission recognises the importance of decent green jobs as essential for a green economy and proposes that at the Rio+20 conference provisions for green skills training programmes should be established in priority areas such as agriculture, energy, construction, waste and recycling and natural resource management. Furthermore, the Commission suggests building on the ILO [just transition work](#) to cushion the transition to a green economy.

### **Gender Academy in ITC, Turin**



From 21 November to 2 December 2011, the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO will organise a Gender Academy. The Academy is addressed to development professionals from all over the world and offers a forum for discussion and a platform for new experiences through exposure to high-level international expertise. The Gender Academy proposes a range of master classes and elective workshops. For more information on this Academy, which will take place in Turin (Italy), visit the [website of the ITC gender equality and non-discrimination programme](#).

### **EU supporting Green Economy workshop Kenya**

On 24 June 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Kenyan Ministry of Environment organised a first inter-ministerial



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Green Economy workshop in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop was co-funded by the EU, through UNEP's Green Economy advisory service. ILO was strongly involved in this workshop and stressed that while a Green Economy needs to alleviate poverty in Kenya, it is essential for its realization to tackle the sky-rocking youth unemployment which currently stands at 70%. Taking this into consideration ILO put forward six recommendations for a national employment-led Green Economy Programme which includes promoting green youth entrepreneurship and green skills training programmes.

### New ILO study on Spain urges job-centred policies to consolidate a fragile recovery



Despite encouraging signs that the Spanish economy has begun to emerge from the crisis, a new report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) examines a range of economic, employment and labour market policies that could consolidate a fragile recovery and start to reduce unemployment. The new report by the ILO's International Institute for Labour Studies, entitled '[Spain: Quality jobs for a new economy](#)' calls for a plan of action to ensure that no youth is left behind, while avoiding further wage cuts and pushing for financial reforms that allow sustainable enterprises more access to credit.

### Lunch-time conference 'Preventing and prosecuting trafficking for labour exploitation'

[EuropeAid Info Point](#) organizes a lunch-time conference on 'Preventing and prosecuting trafficking for labour exploitation' on Thursday, 7 July 2011, at 12.30 p.m. at the External Cooperation Info Point, Rue de la Loi 43, Ground floor. At the conference, speakers will discuss the impact of the International Labour Organization's anti-trafficking projects, many of which have been funded by the European Commission. The Info Point welcomes you to a documentary presentation on the results of these initiatives, followed by a discussion on human traffic and forced labour.

### Scheduled meetings

[List of scheduled ILO meetings](#)

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