



ILO STANDARDS ON OSH

The promotion of decent, safe, and healthy working conditions and environments has been a continuous objective of the ILO since it was founded in 1919.

The ILO Constitution sets forth:

“And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required; as, for example, by ... the protection of the worker against sickness, disease and injury arising out of his employment ...”

This principle was reinforced in 1944, when the relevance of the ILO was reasserted in the Philadelphia Declaration:

“The Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organization to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve: ... (g) adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations; ...”

ILO Conventions and Recommendations on occupational safety and health (OSH) may serve several purposes, acting as:

- fundamental principles to guide national and enterprise policies for prevention and management

of OSH, including organizational measures and procedures on core OSH standards;

- good practices concerning general protection measures, such as the control of air pollution, noise and vibration in the working environment;
- protection in specific branches of economic activity, such as agriculture, mining and construction; and
- protection against specific risks; prevention of occupational cancer, radiation protection, safety in the use of chemicals, and the prevention of major industrial accidents.

CORE ILO STANDARDS ON OSH

- The [Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 \(No. 155\)](#) and its accompanying [Recommendation \(No. 164\)](#) set out the basic principles for a national and enterprise level policy and strategy for the implementation of OSH preventive and protective measures. The strategy advocated by the Convention calls for action on the formulation, implementation and periodical review of a national OSH policy; the full participation at all levels of employers, workers, and their respective organizations, as well as other stakeholders; the definition of national institutional roles and



responsibilities; a national system of recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases; the implementation of OSH at the workplace level, employers' responsibilities, and rights of workers and their representatives; and requirements regarding information, education, and training. The Convention is complemented by the [Protocol of 2002 \(No. 155\)](#) and the [List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 \(No. 194\)](#). The Protocol incorporates further provisions on the establishment and periodic review of requirements and procedures for the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, as well as for the publication of related annual statistics. The Recommendation provides for the regular review and update through tripartite meetings of experts of the list of occupational diseases included in the Annex. The [new list](#), approved in March 2010, reflects the latest knowledge on the identification and recognition of occupational diseases. It is a semi-open list to allow for the recognition of the occupational origin of diseases not specified in the list, when a link is established between the exposure to a risk factor arising from work and the disorder contracted by the worker.

- The [Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 \(No. 161\)](#) and its accompanying [Recommendation \(No. 171\)](#) provide for the establishment of occupational health services at national and enterprise levels, designated to ensure the implementation of the OSH policy and relevant preventive and control measures, including health surveillance and emergency response.

Occupational health services are entrusted with essentially preventive functions and are responsible for establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment which will facilitate optimal physical and mental health and for the adaptation of work to the capabilities of workers. Such services should be multidisciplinary and shall enjoy full professional independence from employers, workers, and their respective representatives, in relation to their functions.

- The [Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 \(No. 187\)](#) and its accompanying [Recommendation \(No. 197\)](#) complement the previous core standards and strengthen the requirements for a national structure, relevant stakeholders responsible for implementing a national and enterprise level policy for safe and healthy working environments; as well as the steps to be taken to build and maintain a preventive safety and health culture at the national level. Governments - in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers - must undertake active steps towards achieving and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment by the elaboration or updating of national policy; the development or upgrade of a national system; and the implementation of national programmes on OSH. This process must also take into account the principles set out in relevant ILO instruments, as listed in the Annex to Recommendation No. 197.



PLAN OF ACTION ON OSH

The [Plan of Action to achieve widespread ratification and effective implementation of the occupational safety and health instruments \(2010–2016\)](#) was adopted by the ILO Governing Body in March 2010, with the purpose of developing a more holistic and integrated approach for supporting ILO member States on the fundamental subject of OSH. It builds on the 2003 [Global Strategy on OSH](#), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and the 2009 [General Survey on Occupational Safety and Health](#). The Plan of Action outlines strategies for: mapping the current situation at the national level and the readiness of member States to take action; promoting and supporting the development of a preventive safety and health culture; overcoming the obstacles in the implementation of ratified Conventions; and improving OSH conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal economy. A report on its implementation will be presented to the ILO Governing Body in 2016.

CODES OF PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES ON OSH

ILO [Codes of Practice](#) are presented in the form of detailed technical specifications and practical recommendations in legal terminology. They complement existing ILO international standards and explain in detail the responsibilities of governments,

employers' and workers' organizations, as well as the specific preventive and control measures for the application of such standards. They are not legally binding instruments and are not intended to replace the provisions of national laws, regulations, or accepted standards. These Codes can be used in drawing up national regulations, guidelines and collective agreements on OSH in both the public and private sectors. Codes of Practice provide guidance on safety and health at work in certain economic sectors (e.g., construction, opencast mines, coal mines, iron and steel industries, non-ferrous metals industries, agriculture, shipbuilding and ship repairing, forestry, etc.); on protecting workers against specific risks (e.g., radiation, lasers, chemicals, asbestos, airborne substances); and specific safety and health measures (e.g., recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, protection of workers' personal data, safety, health and working conditions in the transfer of technology to developing countries).

ILO [Guidelines](#) are intended to provide technical guidance relating to particular areas of OSH (e.g. management system, workers' health surveillance, radiation protection, ergonomics, etc.). These guidelines have been designed for use by national authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, professional associations, scientific and academic institutions. They represent useful tools for enterprises and practitioners in the implementation of OSH measures.



CONVENTION & RECOMMENDATION (ANNEX R.197)

C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)

R081 - Labour Inspection Recommendation, 1947 (No. 81)

P081 - Protocol of 1995 to the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947

R082 - Labour Inspection (Mining and Transport) Recommendation, 1947 (No. 82)

R097 - Protection of Workers' Health Recommendation, 1953 (No. 97)

R102 - Welfare Facilities Recommendation, 1956 (No. 102)

C115 - Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115)

R114 - Radiation Protection Recommendation, 1960 (No. 114)

R115 - Workers' Housing Recommendation, 1961 (No. 115)

C120 - Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964 (No. 120)

R120 - Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Recommendation, 1964 (No. 120)

C121 - Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No.121)

R121 - Employment Injury Benefits Recommendation, 1964 (No. 121)

C129 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)

R133 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1969 (No. 133)

C139 - Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139)

R147 - Occupational Cancer Recommendation, 1974 (No. 147)

C148 - Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148)

R156 - Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Recommendation, 1977 (No. 156)

C152 - Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152)

R160 - Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Recommendation, 1979 (No. 160)

C155 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)

R164 - Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164)

P155 - Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981

C161 - Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)

R171 - Occupational Health Services Recommendation, 1985 (No. 171)

C162 - Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162)



R172 - Asbestos Recommendation, 1986 (No. 172)

C167 - Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167)

R175 - Safety and Health in Construction Recommendation, 1988 (No. 175)

C170 - Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)

R177 - Chemicals Recommendation, 1990 (No. 177)

C174 - Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174)

R181 - Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Recommendation, 1993 (No. 181)

C176 - Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176)

R183 - Safety and Health in Mines Recommendation, 1995 (No. 183)

C184 - Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184)

R192 - Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001 (No. 192)

R194 - List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194)

C187 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)

R197 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)