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Proposals on the streamlining of reporting on ratified Conventions

Purpose of the document

In accordance with the decision of the Governing Body at its 349th Session (October–November 2023), this document sets out proposals for the streamlining of article 22 reporting. These proposals follow informal tripartite consultations held on 24 June 2024 (see the draft decision in paragraph 27).

Relevant strategic objective: All four strategic objectives.

Main relevant outcome: Outcome 1: Strong, modernized normative action for social justice.

Policy implications: None at this stage.

Legal implications: None at this stage.

Financial implications: None at this stage.

Follow-up action required: Depending on the decision of the Governing Body.

Author unit: International Labour Standards Department (NORMES).

Related documents: GB.349/INS/7; GB.349/PV(Rev.1); GB.335/INS/5; GB.334/INS/5; GB.332/INS/5(Rev.); GB.331/INS/5; GB.331/PV; GB.329/INS/5(Add.)(Rev.); GB.329/PV; GB.323/PV; GB.322/INS/5; GB.320/PV.

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► Introduction

1. At its 349th Session (October–November 2023), the Governing Body examined this agenda item and requested the Office to present, based on its guidance and prior informal tripartite consultations, proposals for the streamlining of reporting at its 352nd Session (October–November 2024).¹
2. The Office held informal tripartite consultations on 24 June 2024 in which governments and representatives of the Workers' and Employers' groups provided their views in relation to: (1) a proposed grouping of Conventions and Protocols by thematic area; (2) the possible structure of the thematic implementation reports; and (3) the possibility of having an online platform for reporting and information sharing. The proposals presented below build on the previous Governing Body discussion and take into account the different views and comments expressed during the consultations.

► Specific proposals for the streamlining of reporting under article 22 of the ILO Constitution

I. Expanding the thematic approach to reporting under article 22

3. As described in [GB.349/INS/7](#), in general, governments submit one article 22 report per ratified Convention or Protocol. In most cases, these are simplified reports in which governments mainly provide updates on new legislative or other measures impacting the application of the Convention or Protocol and reply to pending comments of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR). Thematic reporting practices have been tested through the pilot project on the establishment of baselines for all the Conventions related to occupational safety and health, as well as to wages and working time. Governments also submit consolidated reports on the application of certain ILO social security Conventions and the European Code of Social Security, submitted by the contracting parties to that treaty.²
4. The Office proposes to further expand the thematic approach to regular reporting by grouping *all* Conventions and Protocols by theme and requiring governments to submit one single article 22 “thematic implementation report” for each thematic group of instruments. It is expected that this approach would help rationalize the fulfilment of reporting obligations by governments and optimize the quality and coherence of the information submitted to the CEACR.

II. Thematic groups of Conventions and Protocols

5. It is proposed that Conventions and Protocols would be organized into 15 thematic groups: occupational safety and health; forced labour; child labour; freedom of association, collective

¹ GB.349/INS/7, para. 67 as amended by the Governing Body; [GB.349/INS/PV\(Rev.1\)](#), para. 368

² [GB.332/INS/5\(Rev.\)](#), paras 42 and 49–52; [GB.334/INS/5](#), para. 21(7)(e), as amended by the Governing Body; [GB.335/INS/5](#), para. 52 and [GB.335/INS/5](#), para. 84(c), as amended by the Governing Body.

bargaining and tripartite consultations; equality and violence and harassment; migrant workers; labour inspection and labour administration; employment and social policy; social security; fishers; maritime; working time; wages; indigenous and tribal peoples, and specific categories of workers.³ The specific Conventions and Protocols included in each thematic group are listed in the Appendix.

6. The suggested grouping has been designed taking into account the content and scope of the different instruments, the areas where coherence and synergy could be found, as well as the matters for which the submission of information to the CEACR would be facilitated if reported together.
7. The Governing Body is invited to endorse the thematic approach to reporting under article 22 of the ILO Constitution in relation to all Conventions and Protocols on the basis of the thematic groups contained in the Appendix.

III. Article 22 thematic implementation reports

Development of thematic implementation reports

8. Under the proposed thematic approach to reporting, governments would be required to submit relevant information through one article 22 thematic implementation report in relation to all ratified Conventions and Protocols of a given thematic group. The outline of the thematic implementation reports, which will be based on the existing report forms approved by the Governing Body, would be developed by the Office for each of the thematic groups. The thematic implementation reports would cover, through a series of questions, all the provisions of all the Conventions and Protocols within a thematic group. Where the provisions of different Conventions and Protocols deal with a similar or interrelated issue, thematic implementation reports would gather such information under one single question, with a view to rationalizing its submission and examination.
9. Governments would be required to reply only to the questions covering provisions of Conventions or Protocols they have ratified. Questions may cover articles of more than one Convention at a time and, for every question, reference would be made to the corresponding Article or Articles of each Convention as appropriate. This would be done without prejudice to the substantive analysis undertaken by ILO supervisory bodies, which would continue to examine the implementation of each provision of the ratified Conventions and Protocols.
10. Thematic implementation reports would not replace the individual report forms adopted for each Convention or Protocol by the ILO Governing Body, which would continue to be used for the submission of **first** reports following ratification.⁴
11. Filling out and examining the thematic implementation reports for the first time would require an initial time investment by governments, the CEACR and the Office. Thus, a progressive roll-out of this approach should be envisaged. It is expected, however, that this reporting format, which covers all the instruments in a given thematic group and includes information

³ All outdated Conventions would be included in the thematic implementation reports of each of the 15 groups. However, governments will only be required to provide information regarding outdated Conventions insofar as there are pending comments from the CEACR. At its 349th Session, the Governing Body decided to discontinue requests for reports under outdated Conventions where there are no pending direct requests or observations from the CEACR. This does not prevent the social partners from presenting observations on the implementation of such outdated Conventions under article 23 of the ILO Constitution should they consider it appropriate.

⁴ GB.349/INS/7, para. 51.

previously submitted by governments organized by subjects grouping similar provisions in different conventions as well as previous analysis by the CEACR, will facilitate the presentation and examination of subsequent reports. Governments will continue to be requested to update previously submitted information but this task will be easier as all relevant previous inputs will already be included in a comprehensive thematic and user-friendly format. The Office would remain available, at the request of governments to provide technical assistance when rolling out this approach. In this regard, the Office, in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin is exploring if, and to what extent, artificial intelligence could facilitate the task of pre-filling the initial thematic implementation reports.

12. The Governing Body is invited to endorse the proposal for governments to submit one article 22 thematic implementation report in relation to all ratified Conventions and Protocols of a given thematic group and for the Office to develop the outline of these reports, and to request the Office to prepare proposals for the progressive roll-out and implementation of this reporting system.

Publication of thematic implementation reports

13. Under the current regular reporting system, in which the CEACR mainly highlights in its comments the areas of non-conformity with a ratified Convention or Protocol, the information provided by governments is not fully used.⁵ Indeed, information on implementing measures that are considered to be compliant is generally not rendered public, nor is it reproduced in the CEACR's comments. Once the information is examined by the CEACR, it remains archived and treated as confidential.
14. To ensure that the information contained in government reports is publicly available, the Office proposes to publish online the thematic implementation reports with related annexes. This measure would foster transparency and a broader exchange of information, enabling governments and social partners to learn from each other's experiences and good practices on legislative and policy measures. This would ultimately contribute to further strengthening the capacity of ILO constituents to effectively implement international labour standards.
15. The Governing Body is invited to endorse the publication of the article 22 thematic implementation reports and related annexes.

IV. Impact of the thematic approach on other aspects of the regular supervisory system

16. The proposed thematic approach to reporting would facilitate synergies at the level of regular supervision, by ensuring greater coherence in the treatment of information on thematically related issues and by avoiding repetition in CEACR comments. It is nonetheless essential to ensure that this approach is compatible with other components of the ILO supervisory system, including the working methods of the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS).
17. The fact that, in recent years, thematic comments of the CEACR have been selected and discussed as individual cases by the CAS, seems to indicate that there is no incompatibility between the proposal and the existing working methods of the CAS, which would be

⁵ GB.332/INS/5(Rev.), paras 49 et seq.

unaffected.⁶ The use of thematic implementation reports would not modify the current procedure for selecting cases to be discussed nor the ability of the CAS to focus on certain issues more than others in its discussions. The organization of reports by theme could, on the contrary, encourage a more comprehensive discussion of the main compliance issues identified in a country in relation to a thematic group, if the CAS so wishes.

18. The current arrangements to guarantee the access of constituents to the CEACR outside the reporting cycle would equally not be affected and the CEACR would retain its ability to examine pressing issues outside the regular cycle.⁷

► Issues that merit further reflection

Considerations regarding the reporting schedule and reporting cycles

19. Following the decision adopted by the Governing Body at its 334th Session (October–November 2018), the current schedule for regular reporting cycles is already structured by thematic area. The Office has explored whether the proposed thematic approach to reporting would require further adjustments to the scheduling or the duration of regular reporting cycles.

Reporting schedules

20. Should the thematic groups in the appendix be agreed upon, a rearrangement of the scheduling of reporting cycles could potentially help distribute reporting obligations more evenly across the years (namely by ensuring that regular reporting obligations on the denser thematic groups do not fall in the same year for a given Member State).

Reporting cycles

21. As explained above, under the proposed thematic approach, reporting would be organized around a single thematic implementation report covering all Conventions within a thematic group. The question arises of how to accommodate the existence of different reporting cycles when the thematic group includes fundamental and/or governance Conventions (with a three-year cycle) together with technical Conventions (with a six-year cycle). In these cases, maintaining the three/six-year cycle would require organizing the reporting and supervision by combining a *partial review* of the thematic group every three years (for fundamental and governance Conventions), and a *full review* every six years (of all instruments of the thematic group). The co-existence of different reporting cycles within the same thematic implementation report would reflect the different nature of the Conventions concerned, but would limit the areas where synergies and coherence could be fostered in reporting and supervision, thereby reducing the advantages of a thematic approach.
22. In order to achieve the full potential of this approach, further reflection could be given to unifying the cycle for the seven thematic groups which combine fundamental/governance

⁶ Haiti – [Working time](#), in 2018 (Conventions Nos 1, 14, 30 and 106); Serbia – [Labour inspection](#), in 2019 (Conventions Nos 81 and 129); Nigeria – [Wages](#), in 2022 (Conventions Nos 26 and 95); Italy – [Labour inspection](#), in 2023 (Conventions Nos 81 and 129); Kazakhstan – [Labour Inspection](#), in 2024 (Conventions Nos 81 and 129).

⁷ The importance of those arrangements was also underlined in past discussions of the Governing Body on the issue of streamlining of reporting (GB.331/INS/5, para. 42).

Conventions with technical Conventions, namely the groups on forced labour, child labour, discrimination, freedom of association, labour inspection, safety and health and employment). Adopting a unified cycle for all the instruments within the same thematic group would enable a full and complete review of all such instruments at the same time. Possible options that could be considered include:

- (a) a unified cycle of three years for the above-mentioned seven thematic groups and a six-year cycle for the other eight groups;
 - (b) a unified cycle of three years for the thematic groups containing fundamental and technical conventions; a four-year cycle for the thematic groups containing governance and technical Conventions (namely those groups related to employment and labour inspection) and a six-year cycle for the other groups.
23. Should the thematic approach and the associated thematic groups be endorsed by the Governing Body, the latter is invited to request the Office to prepare further proposals for reporting calendars that could accommodate the impact of such an approach on current reporting schedules and cycles.

An online platform for reporting and information sharing

24. In order to further modernize the reporting system, the Office proposes to create an online platform that would enable Governments to submit information in a more agile and modern manner. Such a platform would facilitate governments' access to the information that they have previously submitted to the CEACR, thereby reducing the time needed for providing new details under the subsequent reporting period. At the same time, the platform would enable the Office to process and make available, in a user-friendly manner, the full information to the public, following examination by the CEACR.⁸ This would further foster a broader exchange of information, enabling governments and social partners to learn from each other's experiences and good practices on legislative and policy measures.
25. On the basis of the guidance provided by the Governing Body, the Office would finalize the specific requirements for the development of an online platform and inform the Governing Body of the associated cost implications at its next session in March 2025.

Utilization of thematic implementation reports by the social partners

26. The proposed system would not affect the existing practice regarding the submission of article 23 observations by the social partners.

► Draft decision

27. The Governing Body:

- (a) **endorsed the thematic approach to reporting under article 22 of the ILO Constitution in relation to all Conventions and Protocols on the basis of the thematic groups contained in the Appendix and the submission of thematic implementation**

⁸ As highlighted by the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in a research paper commissioned by the Office last year on international treaty-based reporting systems, the publication of the reports and easy access to information are key factors in encouraging good reporting practices.

reports by governments as well as the publication of the article 22 thematic implementation reports and related annexes; and

- (b) based on its guidance and further tripartite consultations, requested the Office to prepare proposals for the progressive roll-out and implementation of the system outlined in subparagraph (a), including the development of an online platform, for its 353rd Session (March 2025).

► Appendix

Thematic groups of Conventions and Protocols

Occupational safety and health	Forced labour	Child labour ¹	Freedom of association, collective bargaining, tripartite consultations	Equality and violence and harassment	Migrant workers	Labour inspection and labour administration	Employment and social policy ²	Social security ³	Fishers ⁴	Maritime ⁵	Working time ⁶	Wages	Indigenous and tribal peoples ⁷	Specific categories of workers ⁸
C.155	C.29	C.138	C.87	C.100	C.97	C.81	C.122	C.12	C.112	MLC 2006	C.1	C.26	C.169	C.27
C.187	C.105	C.182	C.98	C.111	C.143	C.129	C.82	C.19	C.113		C.14	C.95		C.110
P.155	P.29	C.6	C.144	C.156		P.81	C.83	C.71	C.114		C.30	C.99		P.110
C.13		C.77	C.11	C.190		C.150	C.88	C.102	C.125		C.47	C.131		C.137
C.115		C.78	C.84				C.94	C.118	C.126		C.89	C.173		C.149
C.119		C.79	C.135				C.117	C.121	C.185		P.89			C.152
C.120		C.90	C.141				C.140	C.128	C.188		C.106			C.172
C.127		C.124	C.151				C.142	C.130			C.132			C.177
C.136			C.154				C.158	C.157			C.153			C.189
C.139							C.159	C.168			C.171			
C.148							C.160	C.183			C.175			
C.161							C.181							
C.162														
C.167														
C.170														
C.174														
C.176														
C.184														

¹ Conventions Nos 5, 10, 33, 59 and 123 have outdated status. ² Conventions Nos 2 and 96 have outdated status. ³ Conventions Nos 3, 17, 18, 24, 25, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48 and 103 have outdated status. ⁴ Convention No. 112 has outdated status. ⁵ Conventions Nos. 22, 23, 55, 56, 58, 68, 69, 92, 108, 133, 134, 146, 147, 164 and 166 have outdated status. ⁶ Conventions Nos 20, 43, 49, 52 and 101 have outdated status. ⁷ Convention No. 107 has outdated status. ⁸ Convention No. 32 has outdated status.