

Committee on the Application of Standards

Date: 16 May 2025

Governments appearing on the preliminary list of individual cases have the opportunity, if they so wish, to supply on a purely voluntary basis, written information before 19 May 2025.

► Information on the application of ratified Conventions supplied by governments on the preliminary list of individual cases

Turkmenistan (ratification: 1997)

Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)

The Government has provided the following written information.

The Government has taken significant steps to fulfil its obligations under the Convention, within the framework of the Roadmap for Cooperation between the Government of Turkmenistan and the ILO for the period 2024–25, following the submission of the regular report under this Convention, presented in accordance with the provisions of article 22 of the ILO Constitution as of 1 September 2024.

The Government, in cooperation with the social partners, has carried out relevant work. In accordance with Section 2.1 of the Roadmap – Improvement of Legislation on Issues of Forced and Child Labour – amendments and additions were prepared to Articles 8 and 23 of the Labour Code concerning forced and child labour. These amendments were adopted at the regular session of the Parliament of Turkmenistan on 30 November 2024.

The amendments to the Code were made in line with the recommendations of ILO experts resulting from a legislative review, and included changes regarding the exclusion of certain types of work from the list of those “not considered forced or compulsory labour,” as well as changes related to limiting the types of organizations in which, under procedures established by law, it is permitted to conclude an employment contract with a person under the age of eighteen.

In accordance with the Law “On the Tripartite Commission for the Regulation of Social and Labour Relations”, a General Agreement (a legal act establishing the general principles for the regulation of social and labour relations in Turkmenistan) was concluded between the parties at a regular meeting of the Commission in December 2024 for the period of 2025–27. In this legal act, the parties committed to promoting the principles of non-discrimination in labour relations, preventing forced or compulsory labour, as well as ensuring the timely and effective implementation of the actions outlined in the 2024–25 Roadmap.

Within the framework of the Roadmap, from August to November 2024, a Survey on Hiring Practices and Working Conditions during the 2024 Cotton Harvest was conducted with the participation of ILO specialists and experts.

The objectives of the survey included:

- assessing recruitment practices and methods used to engage workers for the cotton harvest;
- examining working conditions and key characteristics of cotton farms;
- evaluating aspects of recruitment and working conditions that may require improvement for manual cotton pickers;
- identifying the types of corrective measures needed to improve working conditions and recruitment practices;
- raising awareness among employers and cotton pickers.

The visits of ILO representatives included field trips to cotton fields across all regions of the country, interviews in a Q&A format with stakeholders – particularly farmers, leaseholders, and workers – as well as visits to local government institutions, educational and healthcare facilities.

In addition, in December 2024, as part of activities aimed at conducting consultations, studies, and wage analysis – including the assessment of the need to establish a fair and effective minimum wage for cotton pickers – an ILO wage specialist visited two regions of the country. During the visit, the ILO representative collected relevant on-site data from areas that are more likely to provide labour during the cotton harvest. The purpose of this data collection was to carry out an analysis and prepare evidence-based recommendations on establishing an attractive wage level for cotton pickers in Turkmenistan, in line with the financial capacity of farmers to pay such wages.

The Government, in cooperation with the social partners, is considering accession to the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930. In this regard, consultations are currently being held with the relevant ministries and agencies in the context of this issue. In February 2025, a capacity-building seminar was held with the participation of ILO representatives on issues related to the Protocol of 2014, organized within the framework of the implementation of the Roadmap.

This seminar serves as further confirmation of the effectiveness of the joint work undertaken by Turkmenistan in the field of labour, in accordance with SDG 8, aiming to promote the principles of decent work in Turkmenistan and, on this basis, to ensure sustainable socio-economic development and improved quality-of-life standards.

At the end of February 2025, a high-level ILO mission visited Turkmenistan, headed by the Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. During the visit, the parties reviewed the results of previous joint work and discussed current cooperation matters and joint activities for the current year. As part of the mission, a roundtable discussion was held with the participation of relevant ministries, agencies, and social partners, where the ILO presented the Report on the Survey on Recruitment and Working Conditions during the Cotton Harvest in 2024 in Turkmenistan.

Currently, the Government, together with its social partners, is actively cooperating on advancing initiatives aimed at Turkmenistan's ratification of the ILO's Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129).

Ratification of these Conventions and the reform of the existing labour inspection system in Turkmenistan will play an important role in achieving the set objectives.

The Government has demonstrated significant progress in eliminating forced labour during the cotton harvest. To ensure further sustainable success, the Government will continue its efforts to strengthen the rule of law, increase transparency, and ensure decent working conditions.