



Governing Body

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Institutional Section

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Agenda of future sessions of the International Labour Conference

Purpose of the document

This document is intended to facilitate the consideration by the Governing Body of proposals for the agenda of the International Labour Conference for 2028 and beyond, including the strategic approach to be followed (see the draft decision in paragraph 39).

Relevant strategic objective: All four strategic objectives.

Main relevant outcome: Enabler B: Output B.1. Enhanced leadership and strategic direction to ensure organizational impact.

Policy implications: Implications for the Conference agenda for 2028 and beyond.

Legal implications: Those arising from the application of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference and the Standing Orders of the Governing Body.

Financial implications: Those arising from convening the International Labour Conference.

Follow-up action required: Any follow-up required will be submitted to the Governing Body for consideration at its 356th Session (March 2026).

Author unit: Departments in the Governance, Rights and Dialogue Cluster, departments in the Jobs and Social Protection Cluster, and the Research and Publications Department.

Related documents: [GB.347/INS/2/1](#); [GB.347/PV\(Rev.\)](#); [GB.349/PV\(Rev.1\)](#); [GB.350/PV](#); [GB.352/INS/2](#); [GB.352/PV](#); [GB.353/PV](#).

► Contents

	Page
I. Overview of the Conference agenda-setting process	5
II. Agenda of future sessions of the Conference	9
A. Subjects placed on the Conference agenda, 2026–30	9
B. Subjects under consideration for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference	11
III. Procedural road map	14
Draft decision	15

Appendices

I. Items for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference	17
1. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group	17
2. Labour market implications of demographic change, intergenerational solidarity and decent work for older workers (general discussion)	20
3. Update as regards the follow-up envisaged in relation to subjects currently under preparation	25
II. Overview of the technical items selected for the Conference agenda (2016–33)	27
III. Agenda of the ILO – Timeline (2024–29)	31

► I. Overview of the Conference agenda-setting process

1. The rules applicable to the agenda of the International Labour Conference are set out in the Constitution of the International Labour Organization, the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference and the Standing Orders of the Governing Body.¹ The agenda of the Conference consists of standing and technical items.
2. The three standing items are:
 - reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General;
 - financial and budgetary questions;
 - information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations.
3. In accordance with established practice, the Conference agenda also includes three technical items, generally with a view to standard-setting or to holding a general discussion or a recurrent discussion.² Standard-setting items are usually subject to a double discussion, unless the Governing Body decides to hold a single discussion.³ The Governing Body may also decide that a technical item should be considered at a preparatory tripartite technical meeting or meeting of experts, which would potentially enable the item to be handled in a single Conference discussion.⁴ Proposals to place an item on the agenda of the Conference must be considered at two successive sessions of the Governing Body, unless the members present unanimously consent when the item is discussed for the first time.⁵
4. Recurrent discussions of the four strategic objectives under the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), as amended in 2022, are held in a five-year cycle, adopted by the Governing Body at its 328th Session (October–November 2016). At its 347th Session (March 2023), the Governing Body decided to initiate a new cycle of recurrent discussions in 2026 and to place an item on the strategic objective of social dialogue on the agenda of the 114th Session (2026) of the Conference.⁶ The new cycle will conclude with a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work at the 118th Session (2030) of the Conference.

Strategic and coherent approach

5. At its 322nd Session (October–November 2014), the Governing Body approved the strategic and coherent approach to the setting of the Conference agenda,⁷ for which constituents have continued to express their support. The general elements of the approach, such as a strategic

¹ See [ILO Constitution](#), arts 14(1) and 16(3); [Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference](#), arts 10–12, 23 and 44–52; [Standing Orders of the Governing Body](#), section 5 and art. 6.2.

² Other items that may be included by the Governing Body are items that can usually be dealt with either in a plenary sitting, by the General Affairs Committee or by other technical committees holding a limited number of sittings.

³ In recent times, the Conference adopted the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, on the basis of a single discussion.

⁴ Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, art. 45(5).

⁵ Standing Orders of the Governing Body, art. 5.1.1.

⁶ [GB.347/PV\(Rev.\)](#), para. 58(d).

⁷ [GB.322/PV](#), para. 17(1), and [GB.322/INS/2](#), paras 11–19.

focus to the setting of the Conference agenda, institutional coherence, a balance between allowing adequate time for preparation and adequate flexibility, and full tripartite engagement through transparency and inclusiveness, therefore remain valid.

6. In accordance with the strategic and coherent approach, the Governing Body reviews the coordination between the outcomes of previous discussions of the Conference and the consideration of proposals for future sessions. It builds synergies between the setting of the Conference agenda and other institutional processes and strategic discussions, such as those concerning the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29.⁸ It may also take into consideration the strategic direction of the United Nations (UN) in matters related to the ILO's mandate, as have been or may be provided by major events such as the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit held in September 2023, the Pact for the Future adopted in 2024, the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025, the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2025 (Beijing+30),⁹ and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.¹⁰
7. At its 352nd Session (October–November 2024), the Governing Body adopted [tripartite key messages for the Second World Summit for Social Development](#).¹¹ As proposed by the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025), the International Labour Conference adopted at its 113th Session (June 2025) a resolution calling on Member States to ensure that the outcome of the Summit takes full account of these messages and entrusting the ILO, including its tripartite constituents, to play a leading role in the implementation of the outcome of the Summit in areas pertaining to its mandate, including in respect of the creation of full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work; the setting, promotion,

⁸ GB.352/PFA/1.

⁹ The 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place in New York from 10 to 21 March 2025. The [Political declaration on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women](#) reaffirmed a commitment to tackle existing and emerging challenges, including by:

Ensuring women's economic empowerment by promoting women's access to credit and entrepreneurship as well as capacity-building, financial inclusion and financial literacy for women and girls, and enhancing cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, and by promoting, respecting, protecting and fulfilling women's rights to work and rights at work, taking into account obligations under relevant International Labour Organization conventions, enhancing women's full access to and equal opportunities in the labour market and decent work, taking effective action against discrimination, including based on maternity, as well as violence and harassment in the world of work, enforcing labour rights, including the right to organize and bargain collectively, promoting equal pay for work of equal value, providing social security, supporting the transition from informal to formal work in all sectors, adopting all necessary measures to reduce labour market segregation, and closing the pay and pension inequality (para. 15(a)).

¹⁰ The [Sevilla Commitment](#) adopted by the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development calls for, among other matters:

- the respect, protection and promotion, without distinction or discrimination of any kind, of the pursuit and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, encompassing civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, which includes the right to development (para. 3);
- investment in productive sectors, the creation of decent jobs at scale and skills development to enable all people to benefit from inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic growth (para. 21);
- the integration of financing of social protection systems and policies, including floors and policies in line with International Labour Organization recommendations and intergovernmentally agreed standards, into country-led plans and strategies (para. 27(ii)).

¹¹ GB.352/PV, para. 902(a).

ratification and supervision of international labour standards; and the progressive achievement of sustainable universal social protection.¹²

8. The development of international human rights law may also provide strategic direction for future normative action. In May 2024, the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing recommended the consideration of a legally binding international instrument to promote, protect and ensure the recognition and realization of all human rights of older persons, having noted possible normative and implementation gaps in relation to, among other areas, equality and non-discrimination, social protection and social security, education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building, access to justice, right to work, access to the labour market, economic security and social inclusion.¹³
9. The UN open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights is continuing the negotiations of a legally binding instrument to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises and to complement and enhance the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) and pre-existing voluntary measures.¹⁴
10. In July 2025, the International Court of Justice upheld the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, expressing the view that this right “is a precondition for the enjoyment of many human rights, such as the right to life, the right to health and the right to an adequate standard of living, including access to water, food and housing”.¹⁵
11. The strategic and coherent approach also requires appropriate and effective linkages to be established between recurrent discussions and the topics of the General Surveys that are prepared by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations based on reports requested under article 19 of the Constitution.¹⁶ The current practice is for recurrent discussions on a specific strategic objective to be preceded by a discussion by the Conference the previous year of a General Survey on standards related to the same strategic objective. As the Governing Body decided, exceptionally, not to include a recurrent discussion on the agenda of the 113th Session (2025) of the Conference, from 2026 onwards recurrent discussions will be held two years after the Conference has discussed a General Survey on standards related to the same strategic objective. Proposals in respect of the streamlining of reporting under discussion at the present session of the Governing Body include exploring possible alternatives to a classic General Survey scheduled for 2027.¹⁷
12. Some members of the Governing Body have also noted the potential impact on the agenda of future sessions of the Conference of the follow-up to the standard-setting recommendations of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group (SRM TWG) and have called for

¹² International Labour Conference, [Resolution concerning the Second World Summit for Social Development](#), ILC.113/Resolution III.

¹³ UN General Assembly, [Report of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on its fourteenth session](#), A/AC.278/2024/2, Decision 14/1, paras 20 and 25(a).

¹⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “[Tenth session of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights](#)”. At its tenth session, the Chair-Rapporteur of the working group recommended that the 11th session of the working group should be held from 20 to 24 October 2025.

¹⁵ International Court of Justice, [Obligations of States in respect of climate change](#), Advisory Opinion of 23 July 2025, para. 393.

¹⁶ ILO, [Resolution on Advancing Social Justice through Decent Work](#), International Labour Conference, 105th Session, 2016, para. 15.1.

¹⁷ GB.355/LILS/1. The alternatives are presented in GB.355/LILS/3.

flexibility and innovation in the strategic and coherent approach.¹⁸ Some Governing Body members have expressed support for enhanced links between the Standards Review Mechanism, General Surveys and the recurrent discussions.¹⁹ The Employers' group has expressed the view that the Governing Body enjoys autonomy in setting the agenda of the Conference and, in so doing, is free to consider recommendations of the SRM TWG, as well as other areas of the ILO's mandate. The Workers' group has recalled that following up on the recommendations of the SRM TWG, including in respect of standard-setting, is an institutional priority, as has been decided by the Governing Body on several occasions.²⁰

13. The Programme and Budget for 2024–25 provides further strategic direction to the setting of the Conference agenda. Its priority of strong, modernized normative action for social justice will be continued in 2026–27 in support of renewing the social contract.²¹ The Global Coalition for Social Justice is, among other objectives, pursuing action under the thematic priority of “realizing human rights and related labour rights, ensuring human dignity and meeting basic needs”.²²
14. Finally, when it considers possible items for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference, the Governing Body furthers institutional coherence by taking into account the modalities, outcomes and scheduling of tripartite meetings called for by the Conference. The Governing Body has thus approved proposals for a meeting of experts on occupational safety and health in extreme weather events and changing weather patterns²³ and for a meeting of experts on the protection of personal data in the digital era.²⁴ A technical meeting on access to labour justice for all: prevention and resolution of labour disputes was held from 17 to 21 February 2025,²⁵ and proposals for a tripartite meeting of experts on the organization and scheduling of working time will be presented to the Governing Body in due course.²⁶ Proposals for a meeting of experts on paternity and parental protection and other care leave have been approved by the Governing Body, to be held in 2026 on a date to be determined by the Governing Body at its present session.²⁷ In addition, the SRM TWG recommended at its ninth annual meeting (September 2024) five tripartite meetings to discuss research and surveys on fishers, dock work, indigenous and tribal peoples, hotels and restaurants, and older workers.

¹⁸ GB.341/PV, paras 25, 36 and 39.

¹⁹ GB.337/PV, paras 757 and 760. At its 346th Session (October–November 2022), following the review of instruments covering employment injury benefits by the SRM TWG at its seventh meeting (September 2022), the Governing Body selected a number of up-to-date instruments for a General Survey to be prepared by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in 2024 for discussion by the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards in 2025. The report and the discussion should be taken into account in the recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) at the 115th Session (2027) of the Conference. See GB.346/PV, para. 877.

²⁰ GB.344/PV, para. 679, and GB.346/PV, para. 837.

²¹ ILO, *Programme and budget for 2024–25*, outcome 1. The Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 are set out in GB.353/PFA/1.

²² Global Coalition for Social Justice, “Key intervention: Human rights economy”.

²³ GB.352/PV, para. 905(b). The meeting is scheduled to be held from 2 to 6 February 2026.

²⁴ GB.350/PV, para. 80(d). Any necessary adjustments to the modalities of the meeting will be presented to the Governing Body for approval in accordance with the outcome of the standard-setting process on decent work in the platform economy.

²⁵ See GB.355/INS/16/1.

²⁶ GB.349/PV(Rev.1), para. 148 (a date for the meeting remains to be set).

²⁷ GB.352/PV, para. 132(b).

The timing and modalities of these meetings remain to be determined by the Governing Body.²⁸

15. To improve the transparency and inclusiveness of the process, an updated procedural road map for the implementation of the strategic and coherent approach has been provided to the Governing Body at each of its sessions at which possible items for inclusion on the agenda of future sessions of the Conference are discussed (see Appendix III).²⁹

► II. Agenda of future sessions of the Conference

A. Subjects placed on the Conference agenda, 2026–30

16. The table below provides an overview of items selected and items under consideration by the Governing Body for the Conference agenda up to 2030.

► Overview of items selected and under consideration for the Conference agenda, 2026–30

Session	Agenda item			
	IV	V	VI	VII and VIII
114th (2026)	Recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social dialogue and tripartism	Decent work in the platform economy – standard-setting (second discussion)	General discussion on advancing the transformative agenda for gender equality	Withdrawal of the Labour Standards (Non-Metropolitan Territories) Convention, 1947 (No. 83)
115th (2027)	Consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards – standard-setting (first discussion)	Recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security)	General discussion on harnessing the fullest potential of technology to foster structural transformation of the economy, higher levels of productivity and decent work for all as a pathway towards social justice	
116th (2028)	Consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards – standard-setting (second discussion)	Recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment	<i>[Item to be decided as indicated in the procedural road map below.]</i>	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 10, 33, 59 and 123; withdrawal of Convention No. 5 and Recommendations Nos 41, 52 and 124

²⁸ GB.352/LILS/3, para. 3, table 1(2). The research, surveys and tripartite meetings would serve to recommend to the SRM TWG or the Governing Body, as relevant, follow-up in relation to postponed decisions on the classification and the existence of gaps in coverage, ways to improve ratification of up-to-date instruments, and/or possible next steps, including in relation to the abrogation or withdrawal of outdated instruments.

²⁹ For more details on the implementation of the strategic and coherent approach, see GB.328/INS/3, paras 7–15. An updated road map, covering the period from now up to 2029, is presented in section II below and in Appendix III.

Session	Agenda item			
	IV	V	VI	VII and VIII
117th (2029)	<i>[Item to be identified by the Governing Body closer to the 117th Session]</i>	Recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (labour protection)	<i>[Item to be identified by the Governing Body closer to the 117th Session]</i>	
118th (2030)	<i>[Item to be identified by the Governing Body closer to the 118th Session]</i>	Recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work	<i>[Item to be identified by the Governing Body closer to the 118th Session]</i>	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 96 (fee-charging employment agencies) and 112 (minimum age fishers); abrogation of Conventions Nos 22, 23, 24, 25, 55, 56, 58, 68, 69, 92, 133, 134, 146, 164 and 166 (maritime instruments); withdrawal of Recommendation No. 29

17. At its current session, the Governing Body will consider possible items to be placed on the agenda of the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference and beyond for either standard-setting or a general discussion, including possible standard-setting items on occupational safety and health arising from decisions of the Governing Body in respect of the Standards Review Mechanism.
18. Should the Governing Body wish to include a standard-setting item on the agenda of the Conference for a double discussion, it may only do so in respect of the 116th Session (2028) or later sessions of the Conference, noting that a standard-setting discussion is already scheduled in 2028. A decision to include a standard-setting item in respect of the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference could be taken at the present session but should be taken no later than at its 356th Session (March 2026).³⁰ A decision to include an item for a general discussion in respect of the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference may be taken no later than at its 359th Session (March 2027).³¹
19. An overview of the technical items selected for the Conference agenda (2016–33) is provided in Appendix II to assist the Governing Body in determining the possible timing for the items currently under consideration.

³⁰ Under the Standing Orders of the Conference, for standard-setting items, the Office needs to send, not less than 18 months before the opening of the session of the Conference at which the item is to be discussed, a report on law and practice and a questionnaire to Member States. Thus, for the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference, a report would need to be sent no later than the end of November 2026. A decision by the Governing Body in October–November 2026 would not provide the Office with sufficient time to prepare that document.

³¹ The Standing Orders of the Conference provide that, when an item has been placed on the agenda for general discussion, the Office shall prepare a report on the question and make it available to governments not less than two months before the opening of the session of the Conference at which the item is to be discussed. As time is needed to prepare such a report, it is highly advisable for the Governing Body to decide by March of the preceding year at the latest.

B. Subjects under consideration for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference

1. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group

Standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling and on guarding of machinery

20. At its fifth meeting (September 2019), the SRM TWG discussed the follow-up to be given to its earlier recommendations, approved by the Governing Body in 2017 and 2018, calling for standard-setting on the topics of biological hazards, ergonomics and manual handling, chemical hazards, and the guarding of machinery.³² At its 337th Session (October–November 2019), the Governing Body approved the recommendations of the SRM TWG and requested the Office to prepare those standard-setting proposals at the earliest dates possible and as a matter of institutional priority.³³
21. At its 341st Session (March 2021), the Governing Body decided to place on the agenda of the 112th Session (2024) and 113th Session (2025) of the Conference an item related to occupational safety and health protection against biological hazards (standard-setting – double discussion).³⁴ At its 113th Session (2025), the Conference adopted the Biological Hazards in the Working Environment Convention (No. 192) and Recommendation (No. 209), 2025.
22. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body decided to place on the agenda of the 115th Session (2027) of the Conference an item on the consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards for standard-setting on the basis of a double discussion.³⁵
23. Proposals for the remaining standard-setting items on ergonomics and manual handling, and on the guarding of machinery are set out in Appendix I, section 1.
24. The Governing Body recently provided guidance on options for potentially innovative and efficient modalities of standard-setting.³⁶
25. **Ergonomics and manual handling.** Discussions in the Governing Body recognized that standard-setting on protection against ergonomic hazards extending beyond matters related to manual handling would be the first of its kind. A double discussion would thus be preferable due to the amount of work required to revise the standards on manual handling and incorporate ergonomics.³⁷ The views expressed at the 352nd Session of the Governing Body (October–November 2024) suggested a widely shared preference for standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling to take place in 2029 and 2030, taking into account that standard-setting on protection against chemical hazards was likely to conclude in 2028 and that for reasons relating to the capacity of both constituents and the Office, simultaneous standard-setting discussions on occupational safety and health should be avoided.³⁸ The views

³² GB.337/LILS/1, Appendix, Annex I, para. 9.

³³ GB.337/PV, para. 745(a).

³⁴ GB.341/PV, para. 50(b).

³⁵ GB.350/PV, para. 80(a).

³⁶ GB.341/PV, paras 33 and 36; GB.343/PV, paras 29, 34 and 41; GB.344/PV, paras 46–98; GB.346/PV; GB.347/PV(Rev.).

³⁷ GB.347/PV(Rev.), paras 27 and 38.

³⁸ GB.352/PV, paras 26–65.

expressed during the discussion also suggested substantial support for convening a tripartite meeting prior to standard-setting by the Conference.³⁹ At its 353rd Session (March 2025), the Governing Body confirmed its preference for standard-setting after 2028 but decided to defer to its 356th Session (March 2026) a decision to place the relevant item on the agenda of the 117th Session (2029) and 118th Session (2030) of the Conference. Members generally expressed flexibility with the timing and sequencing of a double standard-setting discussion on ergonomics and manual handling. A decision by the Governing Body in that respect did not have to be taken before its 359th Session (March 2027), and the intervening time could be used to discuss possible normative and non-normative action on other items.⁴⁰

26. At its ninth meeting (September 2024), the SRM TWG reviewed normative instruments concerning dock work and recommended that the Governing Body undertake research to assess the existence of possible gaps in coverage in the body of international labour standards in relation to the marking of weight and to identify the relevance of the [Marking of Weight \(Packages Transported by Vessels\) Convention, 1929 \(No. 27\)](#). The SRM TWG further recommended that the research should be considered by a tripartite meeting on dock work, at a time to be determined. The tripartite meeting would be tasked with reviewing the classification of Convention No. 27 and examining the possibility of the inclusion of marking of weight within the planned standard-setting items on ergonomics and manual handling.⁴¹ A global technical meeting on decent and sustainable work and a just transition in ports and docks is scheduled for the 2026–27 biennium, subject to the availability of the corresponding allocations in the Programme and Budget for 2026–27.⁴²
27. **Guarding of machinery.** The discussions of the Governing Body took into account that standard-setting on the guarding of machinery would involve the revision of two existing standards.⁴³ Considering the views expressed at the 352nd Session of the Governing Body (October–November 2024) on other agenda items and the need to avoid a simultaneous standard-setting discussion on occupational safety and health, the earliest opportunity would be the 119th Session (2031) of the Conference. While the default format for setting standards is the double discussion procedure, standards could, exceptionally, be set based on a single discussion procedure, possibly preceded by a tripartite technical meeting or meeting of experts. A single discussion at the 119th (2031) or 120th (2032) Sessions of the Conference, possibly preceded by a tripartite meeting in 2029 or 2030, would avoid any overlap with the standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling possibly starting in 2029. The views expressed at the 352nd Session of the Governing Body (October–November 2024) and confirmed at the 353rd Session (March 2025) suggested a preference for standard-setting to take place on the basis of a single discussion in 2031, preceded by a tripartite meeting of experts, possibly in 2030; however, some groups preferred to maintain the practice of holding a double discussion so as not to compromise the quality and effectiveness of standards by placing severe strain on the Office and constituents alike,⁴⁴ or preferred to have an informal

³⁹ GB.352/PV, paras 29, 36 and 59.

⁴⁰ GB.353/PV, paras 21–51.

⁴¹ GB.352/LILS/3, Appendix, Annex I, para. 8.3.1(a).

⁴² See GB.353/POL/3, Appendix II, and GB.353/PV, para. 719(f).

⁴³ The Guarding of Machinery [Convention](#) (No. 119) and [Recommendation](#) (No. 118), 1963. See GB.331/LILS/2, table 1.

⁴⁴ GB.353/PV, para. 21.

briefing session for constituents first to provide an opportunity to discuss the standard-setting proposals on occupational safety and health.⁴⁵

28. The Governing Body may wish to:

- (a) consider convening a tripartite meeting of experts prior to standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling in 2027;⁴⁶
- (b) continue providing guidance on the standard-setting modalities for the revision of instruments on the guarding of machinery.

2. Other possible items pending further consideration

29. Protection of workers' personal data in the digital era. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body endorsed proposals relating to a tripartite meeting of experts on the protection of personal data in the digital era and requested the Office to include the budget for this meeting in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27. It further requested to present for approval any necessary adjustments to the modalities of the meeting in accordance with the outcome of the standard-setting process on decent work in the platform economy, which is scheduled to be concluded at the 114th Session (2026) of the Conference.⁴⁷

30. Protection of whistle-blowers in the public service. At its 353rd Session, the Governing Body kept the protection of whistle-blowers in the public service under consideration as a possible item for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference.⁴⁸ One group requested the Office to prepare a report for discussion by the Governing Body at the earliest opportunity on possible follow-up actions, including the convening of a cross-sectoral meeting of experts to explore normative or non-normative actions to improve protection of whistle-blowers in the world of work.⁴⁹ Other groups did not favour a cross-sectoral tripartite meeting at this point but did not preclude the Governing Body considering the available research in a policy discussion.⁵⁰ The Governing Body may wish to consider scheduling a discussion in its Policy Development Section on the protection of whistle-blowers in the public service and/or other specific sectors at one of its forthcoming sessions with a view to determining whether a tripartite meeting, possibly in the 2028–29 biennium, might be appropriate to develop normative or non-normative guidance in the light of rapidly evolving legislative and normative initiatives and practices in this area.⁵¹ Alternatively, a proposal for a sectoral meeting of experts during the 2028–29 biennium could be submitted to the Sectoral Advisory Bodies in early 2027, for approval at a subsequent Governing Body session.

31. Labour market implications of demographic change. At its 353rd Session (March 2025), the Governing Body discussed proposals for a possible general discussion on an item on the labour market implications of demographic change, intergenerational solidarity and decent work for older workers.⁵² The views expressed in the discussion suggested wide support for a general discussion in due course, possibly preceded by research, information sessions and a tripartite

⁴⁵ GB.353/PV, para. 27.

⁴⁶ The proposals are presented in GB.355/INS/18.

⁴⁷ GB.350/PV, para. 80(d).

⁴⁸ GB.353/INS/2/1(Rev.1), paras 35, 52–54.

⁴⁹ GB.353/PV, para 30.

⁵⁰ GB.353/PV, paras 31 and 43.

⁵¹ See Appendix I, section 3.

⁵² See Appendix I, section 2, for the updated proposals.

meeting. The Governing Body may wish to consider scheduling a possible general discussion to follow up on the recurrent discussion on employment at the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference.

32. **Decent work in supply chains.** The guidance provided by the Governing Body at its previous sessions confirmed the position of some members that the option of scheduling a standard-setting discussion on decent work in supply chains in the near future should be kept open.⁵³ Views on this possible item continue to diverge. The earliest opportunity to include a standard-setting item would be the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference. The Governing Body will consider possible initiatives that complement the body of international labour standards to ensure decent work in supply chains at its 356th Session (March 2026).
33. **Gendered and inappropriate language.** The Governing Body discussed at its 352nd Session (October–November 2024) the implications of gendered and other inappropriate terms and references in all international labour standards,⁵⁴ and decided to request the Office, among other follow-up actions, to propose the placement of an item concerning the adoption of a resolution on outmoded and inappropriate language in international labour standards on the agenda of a future session of the International Labour Conference.⁵⁵ In order to allow for sufficient time for consultations prior to a discussion by the Conference of a draft resolution, the Office proposes the placement of an item concerning the adoption of a resolution on the agenda of the 114th Session (2026) or 115th Session (2027) of the Conference. Subject to the decision of the Governing Body, the Office would prepare a draft resolution for its consideration at its 356th Session (March 2026) or 358th Session (November 2026) with a view to its possible transmission to the Conference. In light of the discussion at the 352nd Session of the Governing Body, it is proposed that the resolution would: set out an unambiguous principled statement in relation to outmoded language that is inappropriately gendered, has colonial connotations or is otherwise offensive or discriminatory; establish processes for the Organization to address other instances of inappropriate language that may be identified in the future; recognize that the core objectives and approaches taken in the relevant provisions remain as valid as they were at the time of their adoption and that in most cases such language has not negatively affected the impact of the international labour standards in practice; and identify good practices in relation to the evolution of normative language in standard-setting exercises. The Governing Body may wish to provide guidance in this respect.
34. Other items for future sessions of the Conference may result from the tripartite meetings approved by the Governing Body for 2025–27.

► III. Procedural road map

35. An updated proposal for the procedural road map is set out below. At all sessions, the Governing Body will continue to provide guidance on the agenda of future sessions of the Conference.

⁵³ GB.347/PV(Rev.), paras 22 and 35; GB.349/PV(Rev.1), para. 47; GB.350/PV, paras 24, 39 and 60.

⁵⁴ [GB.352/LILS/5](#).

⁵⁵ GB.352/PV, para. 1194(b)(i).

36. At its present session, the Governing Body will:

- (a) provide guidance on the timing and modalities for the standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling and on the guarding of machinery;
- (b) provide guidance or decide on whether a new item should be included on the agenda of a Conference session beyond 2027.

37. At its 356th Session (March 2026), the Governing Body will:

- (a) decide on whether to include an item on the agenda of the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference for standard-setting on the basis of a double discussion;
- (b) provide guidance or decide on whether a previously considered or new item should be included on the agenda of a Conference session beyond 2027 for a general discussion;
- (c) decide or provide guidance on the timing and modalities for the standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling and on the guarding of machinery at a Conference session beyond 2028.

38. At its 358th Session (November 2026), the Governing Body will:

- (a) if it has not yet taken a decision, decide on whether to include an item on the agenda of the 116th Session (2028) of the Conference for standard-setting on the basis of a single discussion;
- (b) provide guidance or decide on whether a previously considered item should be included on the agenda of a Conference session beyond 2027 for a general discussion;
- (c) if it has not yet taken a decision, decide or provide guidance on the timing and modalities for the standard-setting on ergonomics and manual handling and on the guarding of machinery at a Conference session beyond 2028.

► Draft decision**39. The Governing Body:**

- (a) **decided to place on the agenda of the 114th Session (2026) OR 115th Session (2027) of the International Labour Conference an item concerning gendered and other inappropriate terms and references in all international labour standards, with a view to the adoption of a resolution and requested the Director-General to prepare for its 356th Session (March 2026) OR 358th Session (November 2026) a draft resolution for consideration by the International Labour Conference at its 114th Session (2026) OR 115th Session (2027);**
- (b) **requested the Office to take into account the guidance provided in preparing the document concerning the agenda of future sessions of the Conference for its 356th Session (March 2026).**

► Appendix I

Items for the agenda of future sessions of the Conference

1. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group

1. Upon the recommendations of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group (SRM TWG) the Governing Body at its 331st Session (October–November 2017) requested the Office to prepare, for consideration of inclusion at the earliest dates possible in the agenda of future sessions of the Conference, proposals for possible standard-setting items on biological hazards, ergonomics and manual handling, recognizing regulatory gaps, on the consolidation of the instruments concerning chemical hazards, and on the revision of the instruments concerning guarding of machinery.¹
2. The agenda for the Conference in 2026 and beyond regarding standard-setting items on occupational safety and health (OSH) as identified above should be guided by the need to ensure a clear, robust and up-to-date body of international labour standards with respect to certain occupational hazards. The resolution adopted by the Conference at its 110th Session to include a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO framework of fundamental principles and rights at work and designate two instruments as fundamental Conventions has increased the urgency of filling OSH regulatory gaps and ensuring that international labour standards on OSH respond to changing patterns of the world of work.
3. At its 337th Session (October–November 2019), the Governing Body requested the Office to be guided by the recommendations of the SRM TWG regarding the “thematic integration approach”. As was discussed by the SRM TWG, regulation through thematic integration would, *prima facie*, involve customized standard-setting processes for the four thematic subtopics as decided by the Governing Body. Variations could be on the basis of decisions, whether the standard-setting action should result in a Protocol, a Convention or a Recommendation, or a Convention and a Recommendation. The standard-setting process could explore combining binding and non-binding provisions into a single instrument to enhance thematic integration.
4. At its 341st Session (March 2021), the Governing Body decided to place an item on biological hazards on the agenda of the 112th Session (2024) and the 113th Session (2025) for a double discussion. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body decided to place on the agenda of the 115th Session (2027) of the Conference an item on the consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards for standard-setting on the basis of a double discussion. Should the Governing Body wish to follow a practice of a single standard-setting item on OSH per Conference session, the earliest opportunity for a standard-setting item on either ergonomics and manual handling or the guarding of machinery would be the 117th Session (2029) of the Conference.

A. Standard-setting item on ergonomics and manual handling

5. Human factors or ergonomics apply theory, principles, and data from many relevant disciplines to the design of products and work processes and systems, taking into account the complex

¹ GB.331/LILS/2, Appendix, Annex, paras 17(i), 19(ii), 27 and 31.

interactions between the human and other humans, the environment, tools and equipment, and technology to enhance human performance and well-being in the world of work.² Ergonomic hazards are much broader than only those involved in manual handling covered under the Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127) and Recommendation (No. 128). Ergonomic hazards include manual materials handling causing overexertion; inappropriate lighting or selection and use of tools; continuous standing or sitting while working; slips, trips or falls; thermal discomfort; and office postures causing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The wide variety of MSDs renders an accurate estimate of direct and indirect costs particularly difficult but available evidence suggests that MSDs account for around a third of all injuries and illnesses, a higher-than-average absenteeism and significant healthcare costs, informal care costs and production losses.³ Attention to prevention of ergonomic risks and efforts to improve comfort and well-being at work also becomes more urgent as workforces age and workers are expected to work longer.

6. A new standard could, based on the questionnaire sent to Member States in the course of the standard-setting process, clarify the defining role of human factors and ergonomics in the development of work processes and systems and help determine internationally recognized forms, challenges and opportunities with respect to human factors and ergonomics at the workplace. It could set out broad principles for addressing such challenges and for promoting health and safety through the management of high-quality human factors and ergonomics. The instrument could specify national policies and regulations on human factors and ergonomics at work, establish a defined system of rights, responsibilities and duties of governments, employers, workers and their organizations, and promote a holistic approach to the design, management and operation of work.
7. In accordance with the recommendations of the SRM TWG, the new standards would revise the Convention No. 127 and Recommendation No. 128, and update the regulatory approach to manual handling. At its 331st Session (October–November 2017), the Governing Body requested the Office to prepare for consideration of inclusion in the agenda of future sessions of the Conference at the earliest possible dates, proposals for a standard-setting item on ergonomics, recognizing the regulatory gaps identified in that area.⁴ In relation to the instruments concerning maximum weight, the SRM TWG had considered that the instruments had not lost their purpose but were limited in scope, notably including a gap in coverage on ergonomics. The SRM TWG had agreed that Convention No. 127 and Recommendation No. 128 should be classified as requiring further action to ensure continued and future relevance. Follow-up action should involve their revision to take into account the need to both regulate ergonomics, and to update the regulatory approach to manual handling. The SRM TWG considered that the revision process could involve a meeting of experts on how to modernize the existing instruments in the context of the broader issue of ergonomics and manual handling.⁵
8. In its review of normative instruments concerning dock work, the ninth annual meeting of the SRM TWG (September 2024) recommended to the Governing Body research to assess the

² Kathleen Mosier and Juan Carlos Hiba, “[The Essential Contribution of Human Factors/Ergonomics to the Future of Work We Want](#)” (ILO, 2019).

³ See, for example, figures from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in 2013, MSD cases accounted for 33 per cent of all worker injury and illness cases.

⁴ [GB.331/PV](#), para. 723(f)(i).

⁵ [GB.331/LILS/2](#), Appendix, paras 25 and 26.

existence of possible gaps in coverage in the body of international labour standards in relation to marking of weight and to identify the relevance of the Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 (No. 27).⁶ The SRM TWG recommended that the research be considered by a tripartite meeting on dock work at a time to be determined. The tripartite meeting would then review the classification of Convention No. 27 and examine the possibility of the inclusion of marking of weight within the planned standard-setting items on ergonomics and manual handling.⁷

9. The preparatory work for the standard-setting would be informed by a detailed law and practice report, studies of good practices and data collection, as well as broad consultations with constituents, partners across the UN system and with professional bodies and other stakeholders. It is proposed that a tripartite meeting of experts be held in 2027 to advise the Office on the scope of the issues to be covered by standard-setting.⁸ Preparatory work could also be informed by technical guidelines published by the Office in 2021.⁹

B. Standard-setting item on the revision of instruments concerning guarding of machinery

10. New standards would revise the Guarding of Machinery Convention (No. 119) and Recommendation (No. 118), 1963. In 2002, the Cartier Working Party had recommended a classification of Convention No. 119 as “to be revised” and in 2017, the Governing Body approved a recommendation of the SRM TWG to revise the instruments concerning guarding of machinery “at the earliest dates possible”.¹⁰
11. At its 91st Session (2003), the Conference called for the revision of Convention No. 119 and Recommendation No. 118 in order to take into account technical difficulties in the application of the instruments, the latest developments in technology and the need to provide safety and health-related information and training in the transfer of technology. The principal aim of the early instruments to protect workers from machinery-induced accidents by using safety technologies continued to be important and valid but needed to be complemented with comprehensive approaches to promote safety and health in the use of machinery, including the consultation, information and training of workers on all relevant aspects of machinery throughout its life cycle, including emergency procedures.¹¹
12. Based on the benchmarks set in the code of practice on safety and health in the use of machinery (2013),¹² new standards could set out broad principles for addressing safety and health issues in the use of machinery.
13. New standards in the form of a Convention could outline in definitional form the nature of safety and health in the use of machinery, and define safety and health requirements and

⁶ Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 (No. 27).

⁷ GB.352/LILS/3, Appendix, Annex I, para. 8.3.1(a)

⁸ The proposals are presented to the Governing Body at its current session in GB.355/INS/18.

⁹ ILO, *Principles and Guidelines for Human Factors/Ergonomics (HFE) Design and Management of Work Systems*, 2021. The guidelines were prepared by a team of expert writers, reviewers, and representatives from the International Ergonomics Association, the ILO, and other institutions and organizations that recognize the critical need for human factors/ergonomics principles and guidelines in the design and management of work systems.

¹⁰ GB.283/LILS/WP/PRS/1/2 (Office information note, March 2002); GB.331/PV, para. 723(f)(iii).

¹¹ ILO, *Examination of Instruments concerning Occupational Safety and Health (General Provisions and Specific Risks): Technical Note 7 – Instruments concerning the Guarding of Machinery*, Third Meeting of the SRM TWG (25–29 September 2017), 5 and 6.

¹² ILO, *Safety And Health in the Use of Machinery*, ILO code of practice, 2013.

precautions applicable to governments, workers and employers, and also to designers, manufacturers and suppliers of machinery.

14. New standards in the form of a Recommendation (or non-binding provisions in a binding instrument), could provide further detailed guidance on more specific technical requirements and measures on the working environment, control systems, machinery guarding and protection against mechanical and other hazards, information and marking, and supplementary measures relating to specific machinery types.
15. A Conference discussion on safety and health in the use of machinery, possibly preceded by a tripartite meeting of experts, could be informed by a review of the code of practice published in 2013 and a detailed law and practice report and be based on the questionnaire sent to Member States in the course of the standard-setting process.

C. Updating of new instruments on occupational safety and health

16. Standard-setting in the three areas could use appropriate approaches, so that new instruments can be easily updated, in particular with respect to technical provisions to ensure the continued relevance of the standards, taking into account national circumstances. Simplified revision mechanisms used in the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006), the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended (No. 185), and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), or the List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194), could serve as examples.

2. Labour market implications of demographic change, intergenerational solidarity and decent work for older workers (general discussion)

A. Source, nature and context of the possible item outcome

17. The Centenary Declaration calls on the Organization to direct its efforts to "supporting measures that help older workers to expand their choices, optimizing their opportunities to work in good-quality, productive and healthy conditions until their retirement, and to enable active ageing".¹³
18. In September 2024, The SRM TWG considered that the topic of older workers in the face of demographic change and in particular the need to ensure non-discrimination and equality of opportunity, was an important issue for future ILO discussions. The life course approach, recognizing the opportunities for intergenerational solidarity in light of ageing societies, is of increasing relevance to ILO constituents. In the context of examining further action required to ensure the continued and future relevance of the Older Workers Recommendation, 1980 (No. 162), the SRM TWG decided to postpone a decision on the existence of a gap in coverage in relation to the topic, pending research to be discussed at a later tripartite meeting to determine next steps in this regard, which could include a general discussion at the Conference.¹⁴
19. Meanwhile, the ILO's role within the multilateral context on this topic continues to grow. For the first time, the ILO has received development funding¹⁵ to work on ageing societies and intergenerational solidarity, enabling the Organization to advance research and knowledge

¹³ ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, Part II(A)(v).

¹⁴ GB.352/LILS/3, Appendix, para. 28.

¹⁵ Partnership funding comes from the European Union and the Republic of Korea.

development in this area. Already an active member of several UN groups on this matter, the ILO has recently been invited to join the UN High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) Task Team on Demographic Change. In addition, the ILO has been invited to a number of conferences and meetings on this topic organized by the private sector, workers' organizations, governments, and other UN agencies. The ILO's Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia operates a regional knowledge hub on demographic changes, bringing together ILO colleagues working on this topic. EMPLOYMENT and NORMES are progressing in the analysis of ILO instruments linked to the topic. A first course on demographic shifts was offered in cooperation with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) and will be repeated in late 2025.¹⁶

20. Understanding demographic trends is crucial for policymakers, businesses, and communities to adapt and plan for the future. One of the most recent demographic trends with huge impacts on economies, labour markets and societies is that of ageing populations. This trend is observable in most developed and emerging economies and will be the reality of all countries in the future. Globally, the population aged 65+ is set to grow by over 300 per cent by 2100 – from 703 million in 2019 to 2.4 billion – while the working-age population (15–64) will increase by less than 50 per cent over the same period. By the late 2070s, the number of persons at ages 65 years and higher globally is projected to reach 2.2 billion, surpassing the number of children (under age 18). By the mid-2030s, it is projected that there will be 265 million persons aged 80 years or older, more than the number of infants (1 year of age or less).¹⁷ This trend will be mainly driven by ageing trends in developing economies.
21. Demographic shifts are only one driver of change and none of the drivers of change identified in the Centenary Declaration should be seen in isolation. They also need to be seen embedded into economic and social contexts. The combined effects of economic instabilities, increasing inequalities, climate change, demographic shifts and digitalization are creating complex challenges for labour markets that can only be tackled through comprehensive employment policy frameworks, including adjusting labour market policies and institutions. This will enable societies to change these disruptive mega-trends into opportunities.
22. The most recent Conference discussion exploring demographic shifts in the world of work took place in 2013 under the title "Employment and social protection in the new demographic context" and a follow-up plan was approved by the Governing Body. However, since then the issue has become more urgent and prominent on policy agendas and countries are turning more and more to the ILO with the request for help to understand the impact of such trends on economies and labour markets.
23. The proposed discussion would build on the 2013 discussion, as well as on the Centenary Declaration and the recommendations of the SRM TWG and would also take into account discussions on other drivers of change that have taken place in recent years, as well as discussions on inequality, informality, climate change and other related topics.
24. All these above-mentioned topics would be discussed within the context of demographic shifts and new aspects would also be integrated to ensure the inclusion of most recent trends. These additions could include:

¹⁶ ITCILO, [Employment in Ageing Societies](#), 27 October–14 November 2025.

¹⁷ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), [World Population Prospects 2024 – Summary of Results](#), UN DESA/POP/2024/TR/NO. 9, X

- Rapid ageing observable in rural areas in developing economies, a trend that puts food security and development in general at risk. The discussion could also cover the “mirror” demographic challenge in developing countries: youth in urban areas and the high rates of NEETs.
 - The impact of demographic change on economic growth and productivity ecosystems, inequalities, informal employment, gender disparities, skills shortages, and migration.
 - The impact on social protection systems and the need to adjust them to new realities so that they can serve as a protection mechanism to ensure that demographic shifts can present opportunities.
25. As a new framework of analysis, the discussion would focus on intergenerational solidarity as a concept and a lens to identify holistic challenges and solutions.
26. It may be recalled that the Governing Body has previously considered the adoption of a Protocol to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) that would leave the Convention itself unchanged and would allow countries ratifying it to accept formally additional grounds on which discrimination would be prohibited, including age.¹⁸

B. Relevance in the light of the strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda

27. Global labour market trends continue to show the need for more decent job creation, as both the quantity and quality of jobs have not increased to an extent that it could lead to decent work for all and therefore to social justice. Although global unemployment has seen some improvements post-pandemic, it constantly stays around 5 per cent paralleled by an even larger and increasing jobs gap. This, together with high and often increasing levels of inactivity for certain groups such as women, young people, older people and other disadvantaged groups, indicates emerging and persistent vulnerabilities of workers. Finally, improvements in the quality of jobs are often not happening and informal employment is not reduced systematically. The sum of all these issues is an observable and persistent decent work deficit with a risk of becoming even larger in the context of demographic changes – if not tackled in a comprehensive manner through employment and labour market policies and interventions. Policies to be identified in the discussion would lead to:
- *Improved and job sensitive socio-economic trends.* Economic growth, decreasing inequality and decreasing informality through productivity increases and improved social protection would be one of the points discussed. Ignoring demographic changes and their impact on these issues can put successful structural transformation processes at risk.
 - *Informal employment.* A significant portion of the global workforce remains in informal employment, with little to no social protection. A new trend is that of older workers re-entering labour markets but often as informal workers. In rural areas because of a lack of young people and as a means to survive, older people continue their work lives to the maximum, and very often as informal workers. While, in general, efforts are made through various policy efforts to formalize work, older workers and especially those in rural areas are not included in such efforts, while at the same time social security systems often do not include people in rural areas especially in developing economies.
 - *Gender disparities.* With women’s participation in the labour market persistently being lower than men’s from young ages onwards and wage discrimination continuing at the same time,

¹⁸ GB.288/2/1 (November 2003) and GB.289/2 (March 2004).

this has severe consequences for chances of older women finding decent work and also for their pensions which are consistently lower than for men. This gender gap exists in the majority of countries around the world and is particularly visible in developing economies and there in rural areas.

- *Skills shortages and migration.* Ageing societies are intensifying skills shortages across key industries, exacerbating the global “talent crunch” and driving shifts in migration patterns. By 2030, it is projected that the global shortfall of skilled workers could reach 85 million, costing the world economy up to \$8.5 trillion in lost revenue annually. In Europe alone, over 95 per cent of companies report difficulties in hiring due to labour shortages, with healthcare, construction, and technology among the hardest-hit sectors.¹⁹ As older workers retire, there is an urgent need to fill these gaps with both domestic and international talent. Migration has become a key lever in addressing demographic-driven shortages – the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data shows that migrant workers made up 70 per cent of the labour force growth in high-income countries over the last decade. However, restrictive migration policies and socio-political barriers often hinder this solution, creating mismatches between demand and supply. To mitigate the impact, ageing societies must not only promote lifelong learning, increase labour force participation of older workers and allow for extended working years of older workers who wish to stay in labour markets, but also adopt forward-looking migration policies to attract and retain skilled workers in sectors vital to economic resilience without causing brain drain in labour-sending countries.
 - *Social protection systems and care systems.* An ageing population has a profound impact on social protection systems and healthcare systems. Addressing the challenges posed by an ageing population requires a comprehensive approach that includes reforms of social protection and healthcare systems and investment in social protection and healthcare infrastructure.
28. These developments demonstrate the limitations of conventional economic and development strategies as they were designed against a background of growing populations and sectoral shifts towards higher-level productivity sectors, assumptions that are no longer the reality in many countries. Constituents could benefit from discussing how to include the new realities into economic thinking, taking into account not only the ageing trends but at the same time continue to deal with the challenges of young populations. They may wish to discuss how the different drivers of change can influence each other in a positive way.
 29. Changing demographics require changes at all levels: societies as a whole, enterprises, workers and all other individuals. Policies, including employment policies and active labour market policies need to take such changes into account and become age sensitive. As employment policies include macro policies, sectoral policies, investment policies, and so on, all of these must become age sensitive and be changed in a way that ensures demographic shifts are turned into opportunities rather than being seen as a threat.
 30. Intergenerational solidarity may be understood as a pillar of a new social contract that seeks to promote intergenerational justice and equity, combat ageism and prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty and hunger, inequality and injustice. The UN Pact for the Future committed to strengthening “intergenerational partnerships and solidarity among generations by promoting opportunities for voluntary, constructive and regular

¹⁹ Korn Ferry, [The \\$8.5 Trillion Talent Shortage](#), May 2018.

interaction between young and older persons in their families, workplaces and in society at large”.²⁰ The Conference discussion would give constituents an opportunity to consider possible measures within the world of work to strengthen intergenerational solidarity as well as the world of work dividends of intergenerational solidarity.

31. The discussion on potential comprehensive and age-sensitive employment policies, labour market policies and changes in institutions would look at the need for policies that impact the supply and demand side and how labour market institutions need to match the two sides and support demographic changes.

C. Expected outcome

32. Possible outcomes of a general discussion would be conclusions and a resolution which could cover the following:
 - (a) A common understanding of the impact of demographic shifts on economies and societies and its consequences for employment policies and labour market institutions.
 - (b) A common understanding of the interaction between the main drivers transforming the world of work (for example, demographics, climate, technology, globalization, migration).
 - (c) Consensus on the relevance of intergenerational solidarity for solutions to development challenges.
 - (d) A specific mandate for social dialogue in economic and development debates based on the argument that no policy is age-neutral and that improved age-sensitive employment outcomes of policies can be ensured through social dialogue.
 - (e) Guidance on action to be taken by Member States to adopt age-sensitive comprehensive employment policies (including migration policies, skills policies, macro policies, sectoral policies, investment policies and other relevant policies) in the light of demographic shifts, with a special focus in developed economies on ageing societies and in developing economies on ageing in rural areas and youth bulges in urban areas and proposals for normative or non-normative initiatives to be supported in future programming by the ILO to ensure that the demographic shifts become a positive source of decent job opportunities for all ages.
33. A general discussion would provide an opportunity for the ILO to present a tripartite perspective on the UN Secretary-General's Report on ageing and would support current efforts to develop international law protecting the human rights of older people while contributing to the acceleration of the SDGs.

D. Preparation of the Conference discussion

34. Preparations could include:
 - policy briefs linked to several issues to be discussed in connection with the topic of demographic changes, the concept of intergenerational solidarity and decent work for older persons;
 - consultations with constituents to be held under the leadership of EMPLOYMENT and SOCIAL PROTECTION and in cooperation with all other departments;

²⁰ UN General Assembly, Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations, [A/RES/79/1](#), 2024, Action 35, para. 61(f).

- capacity-building events to be organized in cooperation the Turin Centre;
- report to be written by EMPLOYMENT and SOCIAL PROTECTION with Office-wide support.

3. Update as regards the follow-up envisaged in relation to subjects currently under preparation

A. Protection of whistle-blowers in the public service

35. The conclusions of the Global Dialogue Forum on Challenges to Collective Bargaining in the Public Service (Geneva, 2–3 April 2014) included references to the role of legislation, social dialogue and collective bargaining in the independence and protection of public servants, including anti-corruption legislation. The Workers' group also highlighted this issue in the Sectoral Advisory Bodies in October 2014. The Governing Body was informed in October 2015 that a proposal from Public Services International had been received for an item on the Conference agenda with a view to standard-setting to ensure the independence, impartiality and protection of certain categories of public service workers, notably through the fight against corruption.²¹
36. As this was an emerging topic, the document submitted to the Governing Body in October 2016 suggested that it first be examined by a meeting of experts. In the framework of their meetings from 11 to 13 January 2017, the Sectoral Advisory Bodies recommended that the Office undertake research on the topic as part of the sectoral programme 2018–19. As a result, the Office published a working paper on national law and practice on protecting whistle-blowers in the public and financial services sectors.²² The Sectoral Advisory Bodies, at their meeting of January 2021, decided to propose to the Governing Body a technical meeting on the protection of whistle-blowers in the public service sector, to be held during the 2022–23 biennium. The Governing Body endorsed this proposal at its 341st Session (March 2021),²³ and set the dates and composition of the meeting at its 343rd Session (November 2021).²⁴ The technical meeting on the protection of whistle-blowers in the public service sector was held from 26–30 September 2022.
37. Conclusions of the 2022 sectoral meeting called on the Office to undertake activities in relation to the promotion of the ratification and effective implementation of up-to-date international labour standards and other instruments relevant to the protection of whistle-blowers; building the capacity of constituents to develop and implement strategies and engage in effective social dialogue on the protection of whistle-blowers; and promoting international cooperation and policy coherence on the protection of whistle-blowers. The conclusions also called on the Office to conduct studies, gather statistics and research, including comparative analysis of national practices, collect data on trends, criteria, developments and case law, concerning the effective protection of whistle-blowers in the public service sector, with a view to offering guidance to ILO Members and informing decisions by the Governing Body of the ILO on the acknowledged

²¹ GB.325/INS/2, para. 31.

²² Iheb Chalouat, Carlos Carrión-Crespo and Margherita Licata, *Law and Practice on Protecting Whistle-blowers in the Public and Financial Services Sectors*, ILO Working Paper No. 328, 2019.

²³ GB.341/PV, paras 653–662. The composition of the meeting was set at all interested Governments, eight Employer representatives, eight Worker representatives, as well as advisers, observers, official international organizations, and non-governmental international organizations as observers.

²⁴ GB.343/POL/2(Rev.2), Appendix I.

need for future action and discussion, without excluding any action within the mandate of the ILO in furthering the protection of whistle-blowers.²⁵

38. The outcome of the meeting²⁶ was discussed by the Governing Body at its 347th Session.²⁷
39. Following up to the conclusions for the Meeting, the Office published a joint working paper with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the OECD outlining the diverse legal frameworks concerning the protection offered by Member States to public servants who report irregularities as whistleblowers and to employees of oversight bodies. The paper was published in early 2025.²⁸ The study analysing whistleblower protection in 67 countries confirms that global awareness of the crucial role whistleblowers plays in exposing wrongdoing, corruption, and human rights abuses has risen significantly, and that more comprehensive legal protection is a key element in anti-corruption strategies and the promotion of good governance.
40. Accordingly, countries in all regions are enacting or strengthening national laws to protect whistleblowers.²⁹
41. Recently adopted international labour standards require member States to take measures for the protection of whistleblowers in specific contexts.³⁰ As such, these standards do not form a comprehensive framework covering all aspects of whistleblower protection nor do they specifically address whistleblower protection in the public sector.

²⁵ ILO, *Technical Meeting on the Protection of Whistle-blowers in the Public Service Sector*, TMWBPS/2022/8, 2022.

²⁶ GB.347/POL/2.

²⁷ GB.347/PV(Rev.).

²⁸ ILO, *Protecting Whistle-Blowers in the Public Service: A Global Survey of Whistle-Blowing Laws Applicable to the Public Service Sector*, ILO Working paper No. 135, 2025.

²⁹ For example, the Republic of Korea amended the [Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act](#) in 2020 to expand protections and again in 2024 to remove the ceiling on government compensation for public whistleblowers and further expand legal protection. Saudia Arabia adopted the [Law on the Protection of Informants, Witnesses, Experts, and Victims](#) in 2024. South Africa is reviewing its Protected Disclosures Act and Witness Protection Act with a view to, among other things, ensuring whistle-blowers receive the protections afforded by the UN Convention Against Corruption. The Organization of American States (OAS) is developing [draft model law](#) to facilitate and encourage the reporting of acts of corruption and to protect whistleblowers and witnesses. In 2019, the EU adopted a Directive ([2019/1937](#)) on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law.

³⁰ [Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 \(No. 190\)](#), Article 10(b)(iv); [Biological Hazards in the Working Environment Convention](#), 2025 (No. 192), Art. 6; [Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 \(No. 206\)](#), para. 7(g).

► Appendix II

Overview of the technical items selected for the Conference agenda (2016–33)

Session	Technical items			
105th (2016)	Decent work for peace, security and disaster resilience: Revision of the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944 (No. 71) – standard-setting , double discussion (first discussion).	Decent work in global supply chains – general discussion .	Evaluation of the impact of the Social Justice Declaration.	Approval of amendments to the annexes to the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended (No. 185); and to the Code of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as adopted by the Special Tripartite Committee.
106th (2017)	Decent work for peace, security and disaster resilience: Revision of the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944 (No. 71) – standard-setting , double discussion (second discussion).	Labour migration – general discussion .	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Abrogation and/or withdrawal of Conventions Nos 4, 15, 28, 41, 60 and 67.
107th (2018)	Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work – standard-setting , double discussion (first discussion).	Effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals – general discussion .	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social dialogue and tripartism, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 21, 50, 64, 65, 86 and 104 and withdrawal of Recommendations Nos 7, 61 and 62.
108th (2019)	Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work – standard-setting , double discussion (second discussion).	Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work.	Organization of debates and events connected to the ILO's Centenary.	

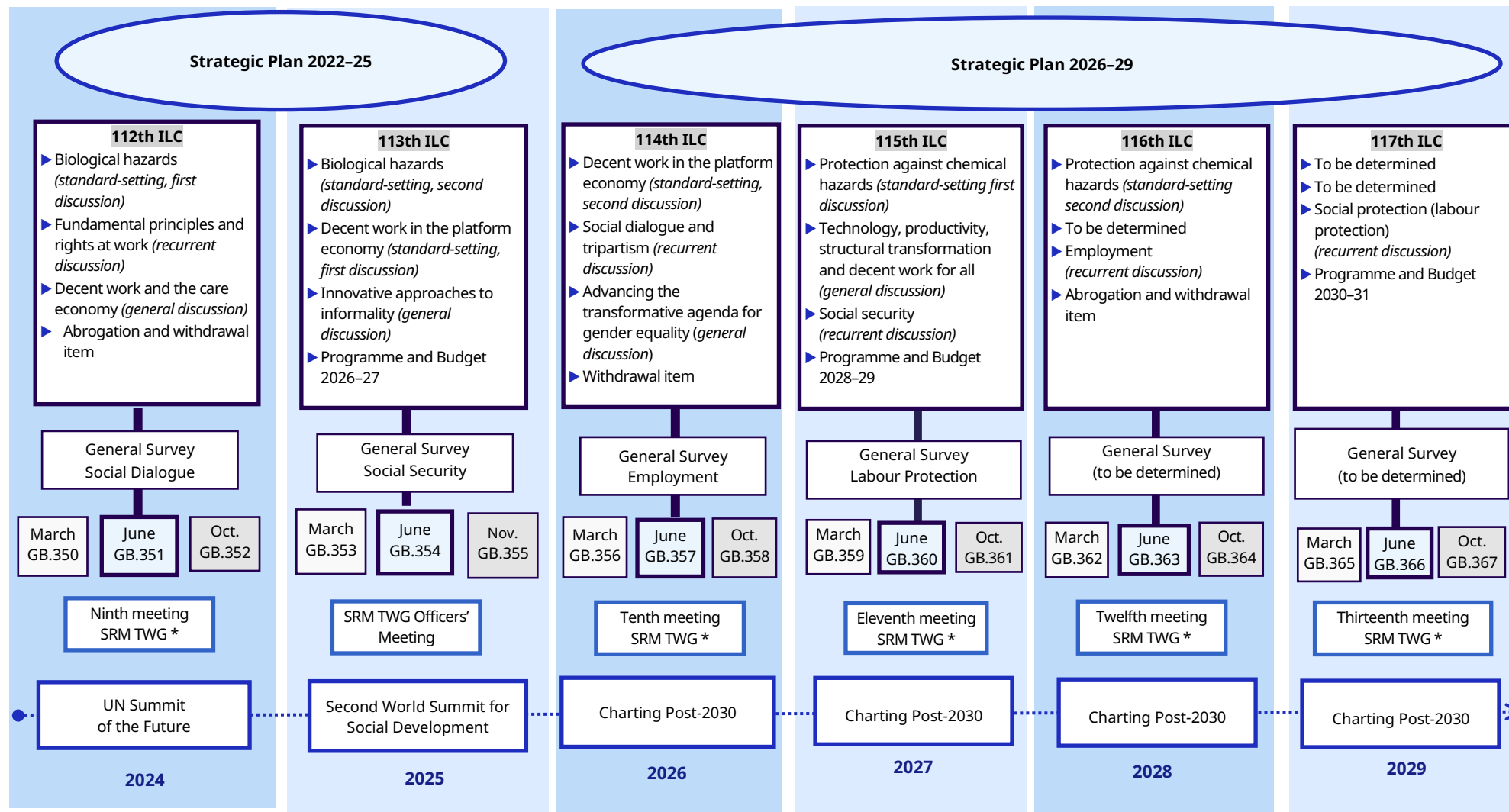
Session	Technical items			
109th (2021)	Skills and lifelong learning – general discussion.	Inequality and the world of work – general discussion.	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security), under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 8, 9, 16, 53, 73, 74, 91 and 145 and withdrawal of Conventions Nos 7, 54, 57, 72, 76, 93, 109, 179 and 180 as well as of Recommendations Nos 27, 31, 49, 107, 137, 139, 153, 154, 174, 186 and 187. Withdrawal of the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention, 1933 (No. 34).
110th (2022)	Apprenticeships – standard-setting , double discussion (first discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Social and solidarity economy – general discussion.	Inclusion of a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work through an amendment to paragraph 2 of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998.
111th (2023)	Apprenticeships – standard-setting , double discussion (second discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (labour protection), under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Just transition, including consideration of industrial policies and technology, towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all – general discussion.	Adoption of the Safe and Healthy Working Environment (Consequential Amendments) Convention (No. 191) and Recommendation (No. 207), 2023. Abrogation of Convention No. 163. Withdrawal of Conventions Nos 70, 75, 165, 178 and of the Protocol of 1996 to the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976, as well as of Recommendations Nos 9, 10, 20, 28, 48, 75, 76, 78, 105, 106, 108, 138, 140, 141, 142, 155, 173 and 185.

Session	Technical items			
112th (2024)	Occupational safety and health protection against biological hazards – standard-setting , double discussion (first discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Decent work and the care economy – general discussion .	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 45, 62, 63 and 85.
113th (2025)	Occupational safety and health protection against biological hazards – standard-setting (second discussion).	Decent work in the platform economy – standard-setting , (first discussion).	Innovative approaches to tackling informality and promoting transitions towards formality to promote decent work – general discussion .	ILO's tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025. Measures under article 33 of the Constitution to secure compliance by Myanmar with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.
114th (2026)	Decent work in the platform economy – standard-setting (second discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social dialogue and tripartism under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Advancing the transformative agenda for gender equality – general discussion .	Withdrawal of the Labour Standards (Non-Metropolitan Territories) Convention, 1947 (No. 83).
115th (2027)	Consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards – standard-setting (first discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security), under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Harnessing the fullest potential of technology to foster structural transformation of the economy, higher levels of productivity and decent work for all as a pathway towards social justice – general discussion .	
116th (2028) (to be completed)	Consolidation of instruments on chemical hazards – standard-setting (second discussion).	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.		Abrogation of Conventions Nos 10, 33, 59 and 123. Withdrawal of Convention No. 5 and Recommendations Nos 41, 52 and 124.

Session	Technical items	
117th (2029) (to be completed)	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (labour protection), under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	
118th (2030) (to be completed)	A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work, under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration.	Abrogation of Conventions Nos 22, 23, 24, 25, 55, 56, 58, 68, 69, 92, 96, 112, 133, 134, 146, 164 and 166. Withdrawal of Recommendation No. 29.
119th (2031) (to be completed)	An evaluation of the impact of the Social Justice Declaration (to be confirmed).	
120th (2032) (to be completed)		
121st (2033) (to be completed)		Abrogation of Conventions Nos 17, 18 and 42 and Nos 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40, as well as Conventions Nos 3 and 103 (subject to reconsideration following evaluation in 2028). Withdrawal of Recommendations Nos 22, 23 and 24, as well as Recommendation No. 95 (subject to reconsideration following evaluation in 2028).

► Appendix III

Agenda of the ILO – Timeline (2024–29)



* SRM TWG – Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group.