



Governing Body

356th Session, Geneva, 23 March–2 April 2026

Policy Development Section

POL

Social Dialogue Segment

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Outcomes of sectoral meetings held in the second half of 2025 and other sectoral activities

Purpose of the document

This document covers the sectoral meetings held in the second half of 2025, including the approval of the outcome of the Technical Meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector and the Guidelines for fair labour market services for migrant fishers (see the draft decision in paragraph 17), and informs the Governing Body of the preliminary work undertaken on the possible revisions to the modalities of sectoral meetings.

Relevant strategic objective: Social dialogue and tripartism.

Main relevant outcome: All policy outcomes.

Policy implications: None.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: The Office would be required to follow up as proposed.

Author unit: Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR).

► Introduction

1. This document reports to the Governing Body the outcomes of the two sectoral meetings held in the second half of 2025. Further to the decision of the Governing Body at its 355th Session (November 2025) on the recommendations of the Tripartite Meeting on the Review of the Functioning of the Governing Body that was held from 5 to 8 May 2025, the proposals for future sectoral meetings are now included under the agenda item *Proposed programme of ILO official meetings for 2026–27* in document GB.356/POL/3. Lastly, the document informs the Governing Body of the preliminary work undertaken on possible revisions to the modalities of sectoral meetings.

► I. Meetings held in the second half of 2025

A. Technical Meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector

2. In accordance with an earlier decision by the Governing Body,¹ the Technical Meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector was held from 1 to 5 September 2025.
3. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss current and emerging issues related to the realization of decent work in the railways sector, with an emphasis on safety and sustainability. The meeting also discussed fundamental principles and rights at work, including equal opportunities, particularly for women and young persons, as well as the promotion of sustainable enterprises, a just transition, social dialogue frameworks and skills gap reductions in the railways sector.
4. A background report prepared by the Office as the basis for the discussions provided a review of the trends and developments in the sector.² It highlighted relevant governance frameworks and elaborated on industry composition, structure, and trends in employment. The report also analysed current and emerging issues impacting the sector and presented considerations for realizing decent work and making railways more sustainable.
5. The Chairperson of the meeting was Ms Sonya Janahi (Bahrain), appointed by the Employers' group of the Governing Body. The Government Vice-Chairperson was Mr Ashutosh AT Pednekar (India), the Employer Vice-Chairperson was Ms Melanie Anne Martens and the Worker Vice-Chairperson was Mr Julio Adolfo Sosa.
6. The meeting was attended by 56 Government representatives and advisers (from 33 Member States), together with 11 Government observers (from 8 Member States); 8 Employer representatives; 25 Worker representatives and advisers and observers; and the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups. Women constituted 36 per cent of participants in the Government group, 37 per cent in the Employers' group and 24 per cent in the Workers' group. In addition, 14 observers from intergovernmental organizations and invited international non-governmental organizations attended the meeting.

¹ GB.352/PV, para. 973(d).

² TMDWRS/2025.

7. Short videos conveying the views of railways experts on the most salient current and emerging issues in the sector, including international governance, financing, energy, artificial intelligence, research and innovation, and efficiency and competitiveness, were presented to further inform the discussions of the technical meeting.
8. The meeting reaffirmed that, since their emergence, the railways have reshaped the world and made a historic contribution in the pursuit of economic and social objectives from one country to another. Today, the sector is a major employer in several countries, and rail services remain a cornerstone and an indispensable driver of economic transformation, job creation, competitiveness and social inclusion. The railways are relatively one of the most energy-efficient and low-carbon transport modes, especially over long distances, for both freight and passengers, nationally and internationally. They are critical to developing sustainable value chains and energy transition policies, and ensuring passenger mobility to peripheral regions and economic hubs. They play a key role in facilitating trade and investment in many sectors, and enabling urban regeneration as well as rural development, and constitute the backbone of sustainable economic growth, in particular for landlocked countries.
9. The meeting adopted a set of conclusions and recommendations for future action by the ILO and its Members.³ The record of proceedings of the meeting summarizes the discussions that took place.

B. Meeting of Experts on Guidelines for Fair Labour Market Services for Migrant Fishers

10. In accordance with earlier decisions by the Governing Body,⁴ the Meeting of Experts on Guidelines for Fair Labour Market Services for Migrant Fishers was held from 27 to 31 October 2025. A draft set of guidelines was prepared by the Office and served as the basis for discussions of the meeting.
11. The meeting of experts adopted the Guidelines for fair labour market services for migrant fishers.⁵ The purpose of the Guidelines is to assist governments and the social partners in promoting fair, effective and sustainable labour market services for migrant fishers. It provides guidance to, and clarifies the roles of, all relevant stakeholders in terms of recruitment processes, work agreements, complaint procedures, enforcement measures and other essential aspects aimed at ensuring fair treatment, safeguarding the rights of migrant fishers and supporting employers in recruiting and retaining a suitable skilled workforce. They are intended to assist States of recruitment, States of origin, flag States, port States, coastal States, labour recruiters, fishing vessel owners, and migrant fishers and their representatives in ensuring fair recruitment and employment practices that protect migrant fishers' rights and enable employers to recruit and retain skilled and motivated crews efficiently and lawfully.
12. The Guidelines seek to be a reference for principles that can be reflected in the design and implementation of policies, strategies, programmes, legislation, administrative measures and social dialogue mechanisms for fair labour markets for migrant fishers, and that can be adapted to different national systems and circumstances. They are accompanied by a set of eight tools to facilitate their implementation. Furthermore, they are supplemented by guidance on methodologies and considerations to strengthen the collection of data on migrant

³ TMDWRS/2025/7.

⁴ GB.353/PV, para. 719(e).

⁵ MEFLMF/2025/6.

fishers and improve the availability of relevant statistics to support policymaking and monitoring

13. The Chairperson of the meeting was Ms Julie Carlton, the Government Vice-Chairperson was Mr Shaun Rogers (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), the Employer Vice-Chairperson was Mr Cor Blonk and the Worker Vice-Chairperson was Mr Johnny Hansen. It was attended by seven experts ⁶ nominated by the Government group of the Governing Body, eight experts nominated by the Employers' group, and eight experts and their five advisers nominated by the Workers' group, as well as the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups. Women constituted 36 per cent of participants in the Government group, 25 per cent in the Employers' group and 38 per cent in the Workers' group. In addition, 34 Government observers and seven observers from international and international non-governmental organizations attended the meeting.
14. The record of proceedings of the meeting summarizes the discussions that took place.

► II. Revision of the modalities of sectoral meetings

15. At its 355th Session (November 2025), the Governing Body raised the possibility of revising the modalities of sectoral meetings with a view to reducing meeting costs and increasing their efficiency and effectiveness, while safeguarding their tripartite character and strategic importance. ⁷ To this effect, the Office has undertaken preliminary work on potential revisions to the modalities of both sectoral technical meetings and meetings of experts with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of proceedings and ensuring meaningful participation of constituents, while improving overall cost-efficiency.
16. The potential revisions under consideration include, for technical meetings, the introduction of a revised hybrid modality and, for meetings of experts, a possible adjustment to streamline the plan of work and further exploration of the possibility of holding meetings outside Geneva. The Office has initiated informal consultations with constituents, which will continue and will be further informed by the discussions of the Governing Body at its current session.

► Draft decision

17. **The Governing Body**
 - (a) **approved the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Technical Meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector, and authorized the Director-General to publish them and the related record of proceedings;**
 - (b) **requested the Director-General to bear in mind the above conclusions and recommendations when drawing up proposals for future work;**

⁶ Ecuador, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Philippines, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

⁷ GB.355/PV, paras 952–979 and paras 206–572.

- (c) approved the Guidelines for fair labour market services for migrant fishers and authorized the Director-General to publish them and the related record of the proceedings of the Meeting of Experts;
- (d) requested the Director-General to take into consideration the Guidelines for fair labour market services for migrant fishers for future work of the Office in this area.