



Governing Body

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Institutional Section

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Proposals for improving efficiency in the production of official documents

A more cost-effective approach to recording the proceedings of sessions of the ILO's governance organs and certain official meetings

Purpose of the document

In the context of the current efforts by the Office to reprioritize activities and optimize the use of resources, this document contains a proposal for a more cost-effective approach to recording the proceedings of sessions of the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body, regional meetings and technical meetings (see the draft decision in paragraph 28).

Relevant strategic objective: Not applicable.

Main relevant outcome: Enabling outcome B: Improved governance and oversight (Output B.2. Effective and efficient support to decision-making by governing organs).

Policy implications: None.

Legal implications: Depending on the decision of the Governing Body, amendments would need to be made to the Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, the Rules for regional meetings and the Standing Orders for technical meetings.

Financial implications: Reduction of the budget allocated to sessions of the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body, as well as to regional and technical meetings.

Follow-up action required: Implementation of the proposals that the Governing Body may approve.

Author unit: Official Relations, Meetings and Language Services Department (RELMEETINGS).

Related documents: [GB.355/INS/6](#), [GB.355/INS/7](#).

► Introduction

1. During the Tripartite Meeting on the Review of the Functioning of the Governing Body, held from 5 to 8 May 2025, participants considered proposals aimed at improving certain aspects of the process for producing Governing Body documents ¹ and reaffirmed the importance of ensuring both the good quality and the timely publication of documents submitted to the Governing Body. ²
2. At its 355th Session (November 2025), the Governing Body considered the recommendations formulated by the Meeting and endorsed the proposed follow-up actions, which included “exploring ways to simplify the production of meeting records and reports in order to achieve cost savings by leveraging the use of speech-to-text technology as part of the ongoing [ILO] review to increase overall efficiency” and submitting concrete proposals to the Governing Body at its 356th Session (March–April 2026). ³ The follow-up action placed the document component of the review of the functioning of the Governing Body in the framework of the Office-wide reform that was initiated in 2025 and extensively discussed during the 355th Session. ⁴ Accordingly, the proposal set out in this document has been developed in response to the recognized need to improve efficiency in the production processes of all ILO official documents.

ILO official documents encompass a wide range of formal documents, including:

- (a) documents and reports submitted to the International Labour Conference, the Governing Body and official meetings convened by the Governing Body (such as regional meetings, meetings of experts and technical meetings);
- (b) documents submitted to and emanating from the international labour standards supervisory system;
- (c) records of proceedings of the Conference, minutes of the Governing Body and final reports of other official meetings convened by the Governing Body;
- (d) discussion papers for consultations on items placed on the agenda of the Conference, the Governing Body or official meetings convened by the Governing Body;
- (e) external communications issued under the authority of the Director-General, such as vacancy announcements;
- (f) documents and communications for internal distribution, such as internal governance documents and broadcasts.

All other documents produced by the ILO, such as flagship reports, are identified as publications (see paragraph 71 of document [GB.355/INS/7](#)).

3. In the context of the ongoing efforts to reprioritize activities and optimize the use of resources, the Office reviewed the processes for preparing ILO official documents and examined options for improving efficiency. These included further modernizing working methods and discontinuing, entirely or partially, the production of certain documents. In conducting the

¹ ILO, *Reviewing the functioning of the Governing Body*, TMRFGB/2025, section III.6(B).

² ILO, *Recommendations to the Governing Body*, TMRFGB/2025/4, paras 17–19.

³ [GB.355/INS/6](#), paras 23 and 25(d).

⁴ [GB.355/INS/7](#), paras 68–69.

review, the Office took due account of the importance of official documents as elements of the institutional memory and authority of the ILO. Section I of this document describes the ongoing efforts to modernize document production processes using new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI). Section II contains a proposal for a more efficient approach to recording the proceedings of sessions of the Conference and the Governing Body, regional meetings and technical meetings.

► I. Use of new technologies in the ILO's document production processes

4. Since the introduction of computer-assisted translation tools in the early 2000s and electronic workflows in 2012, the working methods for processing ILO official documents (notably at the editing, translating and formatting stages) have been considerably streamlined and become more efficient. The Office follows closely the evolution of language-related technology and keeps abreast of any tools that could contribute to increasing efficiency and to leveraging new technologies to streamline document production processes further.
5. In recent years, the rapid expansion of AI across all areas of activity has accelerated the evolution of computer-assisted translation tools. Within the limits of available financial resources, the Office makes use of these and other AI tools wherever possible. Nevertheless, it is widely recognized that human expert review remains essential for ensuring the level of quality required for ILO official documents, considering, in particular, that such documents may lead to the adoption of decisions by the ILO's governance organs, international labour standards, codes of practice and declarations, and the conclusions of other official meetings. In parallel with its efforts to integrate technological advances, including AI, into its document production processes, the Office continues to review its working methods in that area to ensure that the processes remain efficient and fit for purpose.
6. The area of language services in which AI currently delivers the best results is transcription, which is the process of converting audio or video recordings or speech into written text. Since 2019, the ILO, like other agencies in the United Nations (UN) system, has been using an AI-powered speech-to-text tool developed by the Secretariat of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to transcribe meetings automatically. Transcripts of the original intervention and of the interpretation can be generated instantaneously. The ILO has worked closely with other UN agencies to train the tool and improve the accuracy of its output, making it better suited to UN contexts than the other available AI transcription tools.
7. This tool has helped to increase efficiency at the ILO by enabling the redeployment of staff previously involved in the manual preparation of transcripts. It has also helped speed up drafting processes. Transcripts are currently used internally in the preparation of minutes, reports and records of proceedings, and in some cases they form the basis of such records.⁵ In certain other agencies, the transcripts are made available online to meeting participants together with the audio or video recordings of meetings.

⁵ According to para. 5.6.2 of the [Standing Orders of the Governing Body](#), a stenographic record of the sittings of the Governing Body shall be kept, which shall not be published or distributed.

► II. A more efficient approach to recording the proceedings of sessions of the governance organs and regional and technical meetings

8. Recording the proceedings of official meetings – in particular those of the sessions of the governance organs – is a core feature of how the ILO validates and preserves its work, including in the context of its tripartite structure. The records are the authoritative source of reference and are key for ensuring transparency, accountability, legal certainty and institutional continuity. They provide a formal and reliable account of the views expressed by the tripartite constituents throughout the decision-making process and document how consensus is reached in the adoption of instruments, other outcome documents and decisions. They clarify the compromises that were necessary and help establish the intent and meaning of the adopted texts.
9. A review of the processes for producing the records of sessions of the governance organs and regional and technical meetings has revealed that substantial savings could be made and redeployed to prioritized activities. A preliminary estimate, based on two Governing Body sessions and one Conference session per year, indicates potential annual savings of up to US\$1 million in non-staff costs.

The current production process for the records of official meetings

10. The Office produces, in English, French and Spanish, written records of all its official meetings. They are prepared in a style appropriate to international public institutions and may be either verbatim records, summaries, reports or transcripts. These include: the records of proceedings of the Conference; the minutes of the Governing Body; the reports of regional meetings; and the records of proceedings of technical meetings.
11. The production process depends on the type of record but broadly involves drawing up an official record of who spoke, what was said and what was decided. Depending on the type of record, the process could include drafting, which is usually done in English and based on digital recordings and transcripts; editing transcripts; translating into the other two languages; formatting; and proofreading. Whether carried out during or after the meeting, the process of producing summaries and reports is quite resource-intensive and time-consuming.
12. For **plenary sittings of the Conference**, two types of verbatim record are produced, as described below.
 - (a) For sittings devoted to technical and procedural matters (opening ceremony, high-level segment, consideration of committee reports and closing ceremony), the records contain edited transcripts of each statement and an account of the procedural actions. They are published approximately one week after the sitting concerned.
 - (b) For sittings devoted to the discussion of the reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the records contain formatted transcripts. They are published approximately one month after the closure of the Conference session.⁶

⁶ See, for example, ILO, *Transcript of the discussion of the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body*, International Labour Conference, 113th Session, 2025.

13. With regard to the **Conference committees**, the production processes of the reports of the Committee on the Application of Standards were not included in the review, given that its specific working methods are continuously being reviewed through tripartite consultations.
14. For the records of the standing committees (Credentials, Finance and General Affairs) and technical committees (standard-setting, recurrent discussion and general discussion), the production process is the same, but due to the nature of the work and the considerable variation in the number of sittings required, the resources needed are different. The records are produced as follows:
 - (a) for the Credentials, Finance and General Affairs committees, one or more records, containing a summary of the proceedings and the text of the committee's outcome, is produced during the session and considered by the Conference in plenary;
 - (b) for standard-setting, recurrent discussion and general discussion committees, two records are produced:
 - (i) one containing the text of the committee's outcome, which is published the night before being considered by the Conference in plenary;
 - (ii) one containing the summary of proceedings, which is published between one and three weeks after the session.
15. The records of the **Governing Body** are drafted in the form of minutes, which cover the entire proceedings of a given Governing Body session, except for the private sittings. They also set out the texts of all decisions adopted.
16. The records of **regional meetings** are presented as reports. At the 20th American Regional Meeting, held in the Dominican Republic in October 2025, the Office introduced a more efficient way of reporting and produced:
 - (a) a short report, which was published three weeks after the meeting, containing summaries of the thematic discussions, the presentation of the report of the Credentials Committee and the consideration of the meeting's outcome document;
 - (b) a formatted transcript, which was published two weeks after the meeting, of all the statements delivered in the plenary sittings devoted to the opening and closing ceremonies and to the discussion of the report of the Director-General.⁷
17. The records of proceedings of **technical meetings** contain summaries of the entire proceedings and are published between three and six months after the meeting has concluded.
18. The constituents attending all the above-mentioned meetings have the possibility to request changes to their own statements as reproduced in the records. Such a process generates additional work between two weeks and three months after each meeting, both for the constituents and for the Office.

⁷ See ILO, *Report of the meeting*, AMRM.20/D.3, 2025, and ILO, *Transcript of the speeches delivered at the opening sitting, the two plenary sittings devoted to the discussion of the report of the Director-General and the closing sitting*, 2025.

The new proposed approach to recording the proceedings more efficiently

19. This proposal has been developed with the aim of redeploying resources to prioritized activities and achieving cost efficiencies, while preserving the institutional importance of the records of official meetings. It takes into account the fact that the meetings concerned are public and acknowledges the need for the deliberations and the related decisions to be as transparent as possible, which includes ensuring that the records are publicly available on the ILO website. It also takes into account the practices in place in some other UN agencies, such as the United Nations Office at Geneva and WIPO.⁸
20. The proposal has been developed in line with the principles underlying the resolution on multilingualism adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2024,⁹ with a view to maintaining effective multilingual document production evenly in all the official languages of the ILO.
21. The proposal is to replace, in the written records of the meetings listed below, the summaries and verbatim records of proceedings that are prepared by the Office by links to online video or audio recordings and transcripts automatically generated by the speech-to-text tool. The meetings concerned are:
 - Conference plenary sittings, general discussion committees and recurrent discussion committees;
 - Governing Body sessions;
 - regional meetings;
 - technical meetings.
22. The records of the other Conference committees (Credentials, Finance, General Affairs and standard-setting) would continue to include written summaries of the proceedings. The reports of the three standing committees cover institutional and administrative matters, and their production is not as resource-intensive as those of the technical committees. The reports of standard-setting committees contribute to ensuring coherence in the ILO's standard-setting action because they are a key tool for the interpretation of standards and the supervision of their application.
23. For sessions of the Governing Body and for regional and technical meetings, a written record would continue to be produced containing information such as the date, place, agenda, identification of the officers, the results of votes and the texts of the decisions or outcomes adopted. The record would be significantly shorter than those that are currently produced.
24. The table below shows the proposed changes by meeting and includes links to samples showing how the new records of plenary sittings of the Conference and of sessions of the Governing Body might look.

⁸ See [United Nations Office at Geneva Digital Recordings Portal](#) and [WIPO Webcast](#).

⁹ UN General Assembly, resolution 78/330, *Multilingualism*, [A/RES/78/330](#) (2024).

► Table. Proposed changes by type of document

Document	Current practice	Proposed practice
Records of proceedings of Conference plenary sittings	- For the opening ceremony, high-level segment, consideration of committee reports and closing ceremony, one record by subject is published approximately one week after the sitting (see, for example, Records Nos 1C, 2D, 3B, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8A, 8B and 8C of the 113th Session (2025)). - For the discussion of the reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body, a slightly cleaned up transcript is published approximately one month after the closure of the session. - All plenary sittings are webcast live and their recordings are made available on the ILO Live page of the session immediately after the sitting, without a transcript.	Produce one single record of proceedings entitled “Plenary sittings of the xxx Session” that would contain links in chronological order to the video recording of each plenary sitting and its transcript. See the sample. The document would be published the Monday after the closure of the session. Video recordings would continue to be available online immediately after each sitting and would include transcripts.
Reports of the recurrent discussion and general discussion committees	For each committee, two records of proceedings are produced containing: - the committee’s outcome documents: Resolution and conclusions submitted to the Conference, published the night before consideration in plenary; - the committee’s report, containing a summary of proceedings, which is published one or two weeks after the Conference session. (see, for example, Records Nos 7A and 7B of the 113th Session (2025)).	Produce one record of proceedings for each committee containing: - the committee’s outcome documents; - the information that is normally provided on the first pages of the committee’s report: officers, composition of drafting groups, number of sittings; - links in chronological order to the audio recordings and transcripts of committee sittings that would be posted online after the committee has concluded its work. The record would be published the night before consideration in plenary of the Committee’s outcomes.
Minutes of the Governing Body	Draft minutes containing summaries of proceedings and the decisions adopted are published, by section, between two weeks and one month after the Governing Body session. For private sittings, only the decisions are included in the minutes. Final minutes, by section, and the compiled minutes of the session are published after having incorporated any changes requested by Governing Body members, around two months after the session. A compilation of all decisions adopted during the session is published separately.	Produce one record of proceedings containing: - date and place of the session; - names of the Officers; - list of persons chairing the sittings and acting as spokespersons for the Employers’ and Workers’ groups; - agenda, decisions adopted and results of any votes taken; - links to online audio or video recordings and transcripts organized chronologically according to the tentative order of business. See the sample.

Document	Current practice	Proposed practice
	(see, for example, the minutes and decisions of the 355th Session (November 2025)).	The audio or video recordings and transcripts would be made available online on the Monday immediately after the session. The record of proceedings would be published by the Wednesday of the week following each session.
Reports of regional meetings	Two records are produced: (i) a short report containing a summary of thematic discussions and procedural matters, including the adoption of the meeting's outcome document; (ii) a transcript of all the speeches pronounced in plenary sittings devoted to the opening and closing ceremonies and to the discussion of the report of the Director-General. Video recordings of all plenary sittings are available on the ILO Live page of the meeting immediately after without a transcript.	Produce one record of proceedings containing: • date and place; • names of the Officers of the meeting and of the groups; • composition of the Credentials Committee and of the drafting group; • links to online video recordings and transcripts. The document would be published the Monday after the closure of the session. Video recordings would continue to be available online immediately after each sitting and would include transcripts.
Records of proceedings of technical meetings	A record of proceedings containing summaries of statements made during the meeting's plenary sittings is published between two and six months after the meeting.	Continue producing a record of proceedings containing: • date and place; • names of the Officers of the meeting and of the groups; • composition of the drafting group; • links to online audio or video recordings and transcripts. The audio of video recordings and transcripts would be made available online on the Monday immediately after the meeting. The record of proceedings would be published by the Wednesday of the week following each session.
Languages	The records of all meetings are produced in English, French and Spanish, except for regional meetings, the records of which are produced in the following languages: • Africa: English and French • Americas: English and Spanish • Asia and the Pacific: English • Europe and Central Asia: English, French and Spanish.	The records of proceedings would continue to be produced in English, French and Spanish. Video or audio recordings would be available in the seven working languages of the ILO (the language spoken and the interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian and Spanish). The transcripts would be prepared in the six official UN languages (the language spoken and the interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

Document	Current practice	Proposed practice
		For regional meetings, interpretation would be provided in the languages approved by the Governing Body, typically: • Africa: Arabic, English and French • Americas: English and Spanish • Asia and the Pacific: Arabic, Chinese and English Europe and Central Asia: English, French, German, Russian and Spanish

Expected benefits

25. The proposed changes would increase efficiency by leveraging technological advances and by drawing on lessons learned from other UN agencies. The new approach would increase transparency by ensuring that all information is fully available and would offer the advantages set out below.
- The use of video or audio recordings accompanied by searchable and time-coded transcripts would make it possible to replay the actual discussions and search for specific statements.
 - Participants would have the possibility to consult the recordings a few days after the meeting's closure instead of waiting for several weeks or months (in the case of technical meetings) to read the records.
 - The approach would allow for broader language accessibility as the recordings would be available in the seven working languages of the ILO (the language spoken and the interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian and Spanish) and the transcripts would be available in the six official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).
 - There would be no need for participants to request changes to the summaries of their statements.

► Next steps

26. The implementation of this proposal would require only minimal expenditure, while generating immediate savings. As the speech-to-text tool is already being used internally, the main requirement would be to establish an online platform through which the records and search tools could be accessed. The Office would support the tripartite constituents in familiarizing themselves with the new format of records and with the search tools.
27. Should the Governing Body endorse the proposed approach, and in the interest of optimizing the use of resources as soon as possible, the Office could proceed as follows:
- implement the new approach, on a trial basis in June 2026, at the 114th Session of the Conference and 357th Session of the Governing Body;
 - carry out an assessment of the trial based on the constituents' feedback and submit to the Governing Body at its 358th Session (November 2026) the results of the assessment

and any amendments to the applicable standing orders and rules that may be required for the implementation of the new approach;

- (c) depending on the Governing Body's decision in November 2026, implement the new approach at the 15th African Regional Meeting in December 2026 and at sessions of the Conference and Governing Body, other regional meetings and technical meetings as of January 2027.

► Draft decision

28. The Governing Body:

- (a) **endorsed, in principle, the proposal set out in document GB.356/INS/8 to replace the current approach to recording the proceedings of official meetings by an approach that consists of producing a record containing links to online audio or video recordings and automatically generated transcripts for the following meetings:**
 - **plenary sittings, recurrent discussion committees and general discussion committees of the International Labour Conference;**
 - **Governing Body sessions;**
 - **regional meetings;**
 - **technical meetings.**
- (b) **requested the Office to:**
 - (i) **implement, on a trial basis, the new approach to recording the proceedings at the 114th Session of the Conference and at the 357th Session of the Governing Body in June 2026;**
 - (ii) **make available online, for the purpose of the trial, the audio or video recordings of sittings of the Governing Body and of Conference recurrent discussion and general discussion committees, accompanied by automatically generated transcripts;**
 - (iii) **submit to its 358th Session (November 2026) the result of the assessment of the trial and any amendments to the applicable standing orders and rules that may be required to apply the new approach to sessions of the Conference and the Governing Body, and regional and technical meetings.**