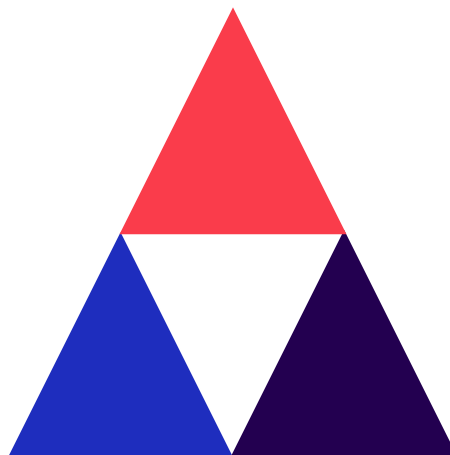




► Note on the proceedings

Technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the inland waterways sector
(Geneva, 20–24 November 2023)



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► Introduction

The [Technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the inland waterways sector](#) was held from 20 to 24 November 2023. The Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) decided at its 341st Session (March, 2021), and 346th Session (October–November 2022) to convene the meeting, the purpose of which would be to discuss opportunities and challenges for decent and sustainable work in the inland waterways (IWW) sector, with the aim of adopting conclusions, including recommendations for future action.

At its first sitting, the meeting adopted the timetable ([TMIWS/2023/2](#)) and the points for discussion ([TMIWS/2023/1](#)). The meeting held six plenary sittings, including three devoted to the discussion of the points for discussion.

In accordance with article 6 of the [Standing orders for technical meetings](#), the Chairperson of the meeting was Mr H. Munthe (Employer member of ILO's Governing Body). At its first sitting, the meeting elected three Vice-Chairpersons as follows:

Government group

Vice-Chairperson: Ms J. Kliet (Pays-Bas)

Employers group

Vice-Chairperson: Mr J. Beckett (Federal Employers in Transportation and Communications (FETCO)), Canada

Assisted by: Ms N. Privee Boudeger (International Organisation of Employers (IOE))

Workers group

Vice-Chairperson: Mr Y. Sukhorukov (Seafarers Union of Russia)

Assisted by: Ms M. Llanos (International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC))
Mr F. Barcellona (International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF))

The Secretary-General of the meeting was Ms Y. Arai (Director a.i. of the Sectoral Policies Department). The Executive Secretary was Ms C. Bader. Mr B. Wagner (Head of the Maritime and Transport Unit) provided overall guidance and support during the meeting. The Coordinator of secretariat services was Ms M. M. Than Tun. The representative of the Office of the Legal Adviser was Mr T. Geckeler.

The meeting was attended by 94 participants ([TMIWS/2023/6](#)), including 38 Government representatives and advisers (from 22 Member States), together with 12 Government observers (from 7 Member States), as well as 9 Employer and 21 Worker representatives and advisers and observers, and 10 observers from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and invited international non-governmental organizations. Women represented 37 per cent of the participants.

► Consideration of the agenda items

I. Opening speeches

1. The Chairperson opened the technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the IWW sector, welcoming all participants. The meeting would discuss opportunities and challenges for decent and sustainable work in the sector, as well as determine which policies and institutions were required to achieve the objective, with the aim of adopting conclusions, including recommendations for future action. The unique nature of the occasion was emphasized, underscoring the fact that a tripartite meeting on the social dimensions of the IWW sector had not taken place in over 30 years. The sector's pivotal role in the transport of passengers and the delivery of goods contributed to the sustainable social and economic development of numerous countries. Its significance extended to maintaining supply chains. The sector was essential for landlocked countries, as well as regions where it served as the sole means of transport for individuals and goods. This was particularly evident in parts of Latin America, Africa, or Southeast Asia, where inland water transport (IWT) played a vital role to connecting remote and rural communities. Moreover, while it traditionally represented a modest share of total passenger transport, it generally assumed a more substantial role in the freight domain. In this context, it was pointed out that the percentage of cargo transported by IWW compared to other inland transport modes such as road and rail, was recorded at 6 per cent in Western Europe and the United States of America. Yet, this percentage increased to 14 per cent in China, rose to 19 per cent in Viet Nam, and peaked at 85 per cent in the Amazon basin.
2. The meeting was considered timely for tripartite constituents to closely examine labour matters in this sector with a human-centred approach. Discussions were deemed necessary on policies, measures, and practices to attract IWT workers to decent employment opportunities and enable them to remain in the sector. This, in turn, required ensuring that these workers possessed the necessary skills and training to navigate technological progress and adapt to decarbonization measures. Therefore, the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises was crucial, particularly for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Formalization strategies were also considered necessary, with the overarching goal of leaving no one behind. Looking ahead to the upcoming debate, the meeting brought a unique opportunity to consider complex and structural matters, seeking to identify a way forward through social dialogue.
3. The Secretary-General of the meeting welcomed all participants to the technical meeting which would present a timely opportunity to examine the IWW sector through the lens of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, rooted in international labour standards and principles and based on tripartism and social dialogue. Particular attention was drawn to the [Hours of Work \(Inland Navigation\) Recommendation, 1920 \(No. 8\)](#), a non-binding Recommendation adopted in 1920, which was identified as the only international labour standard dedicated to the IWW sector. It was highlighted that this Recommendation, adopted over 100 years ago, would undergo a review by the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group in September 2024. The aim of this review was to ensure the resilience of ILO standards in response to the evolving world of work,. The ILO's past involvement in the sector included discussions in the tripartite Inland Transport Committee, resulting in resolutions adopted from 1947 to 1992. The outcomes also drew from meetings like the 1968 global meeting and Rhine-specific sessions. The Report prepared by the Office for this meeting addressed potential knowledge gaps in this sector, with a specific focus on three regions: Southeast Asia/Mekong River system, Southern Cone of the Americas/Hidrovia Paraná-Paraguay, and Europe. Additionally, special attention was given to the sustainable aspects of IWT, emphasizing its comparatively lower energy consumption and emissions than road

transport and railways. From an economic standpoint, it was acknowledged as a cost-effective and reliable mode of transport that excelled in carrying large quantities of bulk cargo over long distances. Despite the absence of a global employment figure, it was highlighted that the IWW sector was employment-intensive in certain regions, such as Asia, while in others, the sector exhibited low employment numbers but significant economic importance. Informality was identified as a structural challenge observed in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

4. Recent accidents in inland navigation raised safety concerns, with overloading, vessel unseaworthiness, poor safety measures, lack of training, and fatigue identified as contributing factors. It was noted that some regions in the IWW sector had initiated just transition measures, crucial for equipping workers with skills to handle new fuels and technologies. The importance of gender-responsive, inclusive, integrated, and coherent just transition frameworks coordinated with relevant policies was underscored. Finally, the meeting's objective was highlighted, emphasizing that it would adopt action-oriented recommendations for decent work in the IWW sector at international, regional, and subregional levels with effective linkages with ILO country programmes. A strong emphasis was placed on the necessity for these recommendations to be realistic, considering Office resources.
5. The Executive Secretary of the meeting provided an overview of the content of the [Report for discussion \(TMIWS/2023\)](#) which had been prepared as a basis for discussion. It was highlighted that there was no established definition of IWT, which might be seen to be the movement of goods and/or passengers using either vessels solely or mainly navigating on IWW (IWW vessels), or also coastal shipping vessels and ships navigating both at sea and on IWW (river-sea vessels). Given that seagoing ships came within the remit of the [Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended \(MLC, 2006\)](#), and fishing vessels fell under the scope of the [Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 \(No. 188\)](#), the Report was circumscribed to IWW vessels neither covered by the MLC, 2006, nor by Convention No. 188. The Report was structured in three parts. Chapter one contained an overview of the IWW sector in terms of its role and structure, employment, and other parameters. Chapter two set out the trends and developments shaping the sector, with a focus on environmental sustainability and technological advances. Chapter three described the challenges and opportunities for decent and sustainable work in IWT. One constraint worth noting was that statistical data on IWT at the international level was generally scarce, and ILO estimates were based on rather small samples. The Report also analysed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers and employers along with issues around scale-increase, re-flagging of vessels to other countries, migrant workers, and hydropower development. A section on fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW) underscored the importance of freedom of association, collective bargaining, the necessity to combat forced labour and human trafficking in IWT, and the promotion of gender equality in the sector, including addressing violence and harassment. In terms of mapping out governance and regulatory frameworks, the Report mentioned international and regional instruments governing IWT with their corresponding custodians.
6. The Employer Vice-Chairperson thanked the Office for the comprehensive Report, highlighting the significance of the IWW sector, particularly for landlocked countries. Overall, the Employers' group supported the key areas of focus outlined in the Report, focusing on addressing challenges and harnessing innovation, clean technology, and skills development strategies. The industry's significant multiplier effects, such as creating indirect and induced employment and business opportunities, were highlighted. The main message conveyed by the Vice-Chairperson emphasized the necessity to advance an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises in response to changing geopolitical events, evolving consumer habits, and the adverse impacts of climate change directly affecting the sector. This was deemed crucial for both enterprises and workers. Furthermore, it was stressed that the IWW sector represented a diverse ecosystem with

enterprises of varying sizes, operating in different regions and economies. The crisis had had significant and diverse implications for both enterprises and workers, and there was a need to acknowledge and address this diversity in the meeting's conclusions. The principle of "one size does not fit all" was reiterated, emphasizing the importance of allowing regional or national committees or commissions to regulate the industry based on their economic development, political integration, and social realities.

7. Additionally, to ensure the sector's livelihood, contribution to a just transition, and job creation, it was crucial to have quality information and data. The scarcity of data in the sector, as acknowledged in paragraph 5 of the Report, needed improvement to avoid basing strategies on statistically unrepresentative estimates and samples. This could lead to undesirable outcomes for both businesses and workers, hindering the sector's potential contributions to growth and development. Given the continued technological advancements creating new job opportunities and transforming the world of work, skills development was essential for transitioning to a more digital environment in the sector. Social partners, including governments and training institutions, were seen as having the opportunity to collaborate in developing adequate curricula to address skills gaps. Identifying priorities and drawing lessons from existing local, regional, and global policies were considered essential for social partners to guide ILO action, especially in response to the evolving realities of work that often required nuanced approaches. The meeting's significance was emphasized, highlighting the need for concrete conclusions based on evidence and leveraging the progress achieved.
8. The Worker Vice-Chairperson noted the lack of appreciation and understanding for the role of inland navigation in maintaining continuous supply chains. The inability to discuss set of global rules for inland navigation was seen as evidence of the fragmentation within the IWW industry. While noteworthy regulations existed in certain regions, backed by ongoing collaboration between employers and workers, other parts of the world lacked regulations or enforcement, placing workers and enterprises in precarious situations and increasing the risk of accidents and environmental disasters. The current state of the industry was characterized as unregulated with inadequate tax compliance. Lessons could be learned from the maritime sector, where recent efforts, especially the work of both the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the ILO, had provided a platform for discussing shipping matters and establishing minimum global standards after years of debate.
9. A diversity of boats and vessels in the inland navigation industry were regulated by legislation varying from region to region. The Report's clear and unequivocal definition of IWW vessels, encompassing strategically important tugboats, was noted. Tugboats constituted a crucial link for ensuring the flow of goods and services in and out of ports, and this link needed attention due to poor living and working conditions and the commercial competition jeopardizing workers' living and working conditions, including safety standards. Challenges included hours of work for tugboat captains, for example in the Panama Canal. In conclusion, the meeting was viewed as an opportunity to establish decent work and improve working conditions in the sector. Positive exchanges with employers were proposed to foster sound industrial relations, and collaboration with existing waterways regulators.
10. The Government Vice-Chairperson emphasized the meeting's timely importance for her group, highlighting the fundamental role of infrastructure development, connectivity, and integrated transport networks in socio-economic development. The IWW sector held significant potential for development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for transition to more sustainable economic growth models, and therefore this emphasized the need for more sustainable transport, including a modal shift towards IWT. This shift required integration within logistics chains, seaport logistics, urban logistics, and short-distance transport. In urban areas on

rivers or lakes, the expansion of public IWT services and better integration with existing public transport networks were considered essential for achieving sustainable mobility. However, addressing these goals would necessitate significant funding and long-term investments, posing a major challenge, especially for developing countries.

11. The sector's relevance, in light of current drivers of change, such as greening and technological advancements, was aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 11. Governments were exploring legal and institutional frameworks to address the sector's needs in terms of employment creation, labour rights, occupational safety and health at work, training requirements, and overall worker attraction and retention. In the evolving industry, maintaining social dialogue structures and respecting the right to collective bargaining were considered crucial, emphasizing the need to share best practices and lessons learned.
12. The representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) highlighted the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of IWT, emphasizing its untapped potential to enhance multinational trade in the UNECE region. The Ministerial Declaration on [inland navigation in a global setting](#) adopted at the International Ministerial Conference in 2018 in Wroclaw, Poland, captured the vested interest in IWT and a commitment to promoting the sector's attractiveness, increasing competitiveness, and recognizing the importance of the human element. Key elements for ensuring decent and sustainable work in the sector included focusing on the human element, improving social security for inland vessel crews, creating a level playing field, reimagining training and education based on skills and competencies, enhancing flexibility through digital tools, transitioning to a more automated and digitalized future, establishing minimum international labour standards, and ensuring equal opportunities for women in inland navigation. Continued and strengthened cooperation among stakeholders at the pan-European and global levels was deemed essential to secure a future transport sector contributing significantly to achieving the SDGs. UNECE highly appreciated the ILO's key role in developing labour standards and improving working and social conditions for workers.
13. The representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) emphasized the integral connection between transport and the majority of the SDGs, recognizing it as a crucial enabler for achieving the 2030 agenda and the commitments of the Paris Agreement. IWW served as a lifeline in certain regions but was often characterized by significant proportions of informal employment, especially where institutional governance structures and appropriate infrastructure were lacking. This informal employment could be both unstable and unsafe. The COVID-19 pandemic had particularly impacted the employment conditions of transport workers, underscoring the need to address decent work in the IWW sector, a task best suited for the ILO and its constituents. While labour issues were not part of ESCAP's mandate, a commitment was made to support these efforts by providing capacity-building support, technical assistance, advocacy, and a regional cooperation platform on infrastructure, connectivity with other inland modes, logistics, digitalization, and technology. The aim of these contributions was to create an enabling environment for the development of appropriate instruments by the ILO, recognizing the necessity for concurrent evolution in infrastructure, technology, technical and operational aspects, water resource management, and considerations related to climate change.
14. The representative of the European Commission (EC) acknowledged the timeliness of the topics to be discussed, particularly in light of significant challenges faced by the IWW sector. The EC's flagship initiative on smart and flexible European Union (EU) crewing rules in IWT was soon to commence an impact assessment, aiming to establish a common framework for crewing requirements in inland navigation supported by digital tools. The initiative also sought to digitize documents like the Service Record Book and the Log Book, contributing to fair conditions for all IWT stakeholders. Digital tools, integral to the initiative, would create a tamper-proof, easily

enforceable instrument to record information, enhancing stability and accountability. This, in turn, would increase the sector's attractiveness for younger generations. The EC proposal, informed by the impact assessment, was anticipated in 2025.

15. The representative of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) stressed, firstly, the facilitation of close cooperation with international organizations involved in European transport policy and non-governmental organizations devoted to inland navigation. Transparent career paths were crucial for the sustainability of the sector and therefore the CCNR had implemented new Regulations for Personnel Navigating on the Rhine as of 1 April 2023, emphasizing competence-based approaches in accordance with Directive (EU) 2017/2397. The European Committee for Drawing up Standards in the Field of Inland Navigation (CESNI) standards included standards for competence, examinations, medical criteria, and documentation. The CCNR also prioritized enhanced digitalization and simulators to promote modern career development. Administrative simplification for crew members through fundamental equivalence between Rhine and EU certificates was a priority, and the CCNR's Committee on social issues, employment and professional training had approved a new draft work programme focusing on greening, automation, and the sector's attractiveness. CESNI's work on competence included chapters on health and safety. The Administrative Centre for the Social Security of Rhine boatmen was also under the purview of the CCNR. It benefited of a tripartite structure and included among other work to define criteria of the operator's place of business for determining social security.
16. The representative of the Danube Commission (DC) introduced the organization, emphasizing its historic role in promoting free navigation on the Danube. Its work focused on sustainability objectives in IWT including addressing challenges such as zero-emission transition, digitalization, and labour issues. The IWW sector faced challenges like a lack of workforce, an ageing workforce, and insufficient interest among the younger generation in IWT education. Automation, digitalization, and energy transition were crucial drivers impacting the job market in IWT. The DC had also developed a Fleet Modernization Platform aligned with the European Green Deal to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.
17. The representative of the International Commission for the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS) mentioned this was the first time his organization was involved in an ILO meeting. The Congo River Basin had more than 25,000 kms of waterways, (of which 15,000 km were officially classified). With significant potential in its IWT system, the meeting was considered relevant for the CICOS. The organization had two goals: the promotion of the use of IWW and the protection of water resources. Regarding the promotion of IWW, a regional training school had been established, with responsibility assigned to the CICOS. In terms of transport in the Congo basin, it was noted that there was no regional regulatory framework, often leading to adherence to national labour codes or maritime transport rules. He anticipated the outcomes of the meeting would help in supporting with guidance the countries in the Congo basin and its workers in IWT. The need for training in this sector, with its ongoing modernization, could be supported by the regional training school.

II. Information session: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific updates

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

18. The representative of the UNECE opened her presentation by highlighting that IWT could constitute a basis for synergies between the ILO and the UNECE. She explained that the UNECE was established in 1947 and had currently 56 Member States of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and North America. By offering a regional network for developing and harmonizing Conventions, norms and standards, its experts engaged in policy dialogue and provided technical assistance to the countries in need of guidance on sustainable development as well as on accession and implementation of its 59 international agreements and Conventions for international road transport, railways, IWT and combined transport.
19. The European IWW network (29,200 kilometres) included over 400 ports and terminals. By providing a sustainable complement to freight and passenger transport by road and railways, IWW was beneficial in terms of its cost-effectiveness by improving safety, reliability, reducing congestion and had a better environmental performance. The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) had been established in 1956 had brought together Member States, including those of the European Union River Commissions, non-governmental organizations, as well as industry and academia. The UNECE's regulatory framework for IWT included international Conventions and agreements, policy papers and recommendations adopted by resolutions of the ITC and the SC.3. Some of the SC.3's main tasks included maintaining a pan-European policy dialogue on the IWT issues, harmonizing safety and operational requirements, promoting integration, prevention of pollution, recognition of certificates and professional requirements, and maps and databases among other technical and safety related issues.
20. Some of the harmonizing efforts and technical prescriptions for vessels and other technical rules included the pan-European recommendations for inland navigation vessels aimed to establish a harmonized regime of technical requirements for vessels that transport goods and passengers internationally. First adopted in 1975, they had been continuously revised and updated since then. Other SC.3 work included the River Information Services, that harmonized various resolutions, regulations and guidelines of the EU, the CCNR and other international organizations. River Information Services had been formally defined as a concept of information services in inland navigation that support traffic and transport management, including, where technically feasible, interfaces with other transport modes. In relation to the prevention of pollution and greening of the IWT sector, resolution No. 21, [Prevention of pollution of inland waterways by vessels](#) established the main principles for the prevention of pollution of IWW in the EC region. Automation and smart shipping in inland navigation has been on the agenda of the Working Party since February 2018. In 2019, resolution No. 95, [Enhancing international cooperation to support the development of automation in inland navigation](#) was adopted.
21. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the sector as well as its workforce. It had a severe economic impact on the sector in Europe. Despite the challenges, major European IWW, ports and terminal services remained operational while adjusting their work modalities to reduce human contact during controls and transshipment operations. The identified critical issues for European IWT were the suspension of passenger traffic, reduction of cargo volumes transported by IWW, the impact on cargo operations in ports and the operation of bridges and locks, the validity of vessels' documents, certificates and other documents of crews and the replacement of crew members. During this period, the UNECE launched an observatory on border crossing status due

to the COVID-19 pandemic and prepared a publication on intermodal transport in the age of COVID-19, which covered all inland transport modes as well as provided an overview of adaptation measures implemented by Member States.

22. Addressing labour market challenges constitutes an important part of the mandate of the SC.3. Resolution No. 31, [Recommendations on minimum requirements for the issuance of boatmaster's certificates in inland navigation with a view to their reciprocal recognition for international traffic](#), was a key instrument in this regard. Yet, its revision was still pending after the adoption of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 of 12 December 2017 on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland [navigation](#).
23. Following the policy recommendations of the UNECE 2020 [White paper on the progress, accomplishment and future of sustainable inland water transport](#), a workshop was held on 3 July 2023 to address labour market challenges and making the sector more attractive. It was organized jointly with the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF). The workshop topics included international legal framework measures for ensuring social security and equal rights of crew members; digital tools; minimum labour standards at the international level; ways for achieving a level playing field in the sector; education and training; impact of automation and digitalization on the sector; and the role of the UNECE in addressing labour market challenges in IWT. Participants had stressed the need for improving labour law in the sector, as well as developing digital tools for recording and exchanging information on inland vessels, improving working conditions of the crew, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women in inland navigation and enhancing the overall attractiveness of the sector. It had been decided during the workshop to establish an informal working group to address labour market challenges with a view to providing recommendations on improving the overall attractiveness of the sector. The draft [Terms of reference of the informal working group](#) were discussed and adopted by the SC.3 in October 2023. The informal working group will establish and maintain dialogue aimed at coordinating national and international policies relevant for improving the situation in the labour market.
24. Other areas of work of the SC.3 included the promotion of recreational navigation and sustainable tourism. In addition, recently the secretariat had developed e-waterway sensors aimed at visualizing transport volumes on IWW, which could be a useful analytical tool for policymakers and could provide a better understanding of international IWW traffic. A platform dedicated to sustainable transport and trade facilitation was also launched in 2022. Most courses of the platform targeted government-related stakeholders. Ten training courses were available.

United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific

25. The representative of the ESCAP highlighted that the first World Sustainable Transport Day would be held on 26 November 2023, as declared by the United Nations General Assembly in May 2023. The General Assembly had recognized the important role of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all in supporting sustainable economic growth, improving the social welfare of people and enhancing international cooperation and trade among countries. The celebrations for World Sustainable Transport Day could include education and the holding of events aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the public on sustainable transport issues, and all regional commissions had responded to this call for action.

26. The functions of the ESCAP included intergovernmental consensus-building and norm-setting, research and analysis, and capacity-building and advisory services, including project work at the national and subregional levels and providing technical assistance to Member States. The Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026), constituted the main reference document and included three overarching objectives: improving the efficiency and resilience of transport networks; advancing environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and promoting safe and inclusive transport and mobility. The objectives cover seven thematic areas: regional land transport connectivity and logistics, including infrastructure; maritime and interregional transport connectivity; digitalization of transport; low carbon mobility and logistics; urban transport; road safety; and inclusive transport and mobility.
27. Inland navigation in the ESCAP region had been recognized as a clean, safe and energy-efficient mode of transport, but one that was still very much underutilized as compared to its potential. Some of the challenges included: interests in water resources, complicated governance, insufficient navigation aids and safety facilities, frequent accidents, lack of investment in infrastructure and fleet, digitalization gap, insufficient intermodal connection system from river port to hinterland, a lack of skilled and trained experts and workers, a lack of accurate data on navigation due to prevalence of informal employment, and difficulties in securing stable water depth as water level differences occur due to seasonal factors.
28. In the interest of potentially mainstreaming IWW into logistics networks, national workshops had been held and some national studies had been conducted. In terms of future work, the ESCAP was planning to develop and implement customized strategies considering the regional or national characteristics and needs of individual countries, and focusing on developing specific and practical IWW projects considering logistics efficiency and safety. This would facilitate regional dialogue to systematically and continuously deal with challenges for sustainable IWW, particularly in the Great Mekong Subregion, including the strengthening of existing collaborative mechanisms with the Mekong River Commission.
29. Inclusive transport and mobility were new thematic areas. Technology, innovation, automation, regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation, relevant data analysis and technical assistance tools could all be used to effect changes to the sector's workforce and to the supply of and demand for transport skills and expertise. To achieve inclusive transport and mobility, the ESCAP had launched two collaborative mechanisms – the Transport Research and Education Network, which focused on bringing together all the expertise in the region and beyond to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and exchange of information, and the Regional Cooperation Mechanism on Low Carbon Transport, which focused on de-carbonization across all modes and aligning strategies and goals with the Paris Agreement. Both of these mechanisms could be applied to inland navigation.

III. Point by point discussion

Discussion of point 1

What are the opportunities and challenges for advancing decent work in the inland waterways sector, including in light of key developments and structural issues, such as climate change, technological innovation and informality, that affect the world of work?

30. The Worker Vice-Chairperson stated that investment would be necessary for the sector to increase its market share of transportation. Waterways and canals had proved to be a more environmentally friendly way of carrying goods than road transport, and this could facilitate an easing of congestion and a reduction in pollution. With the necessary investment in infrastructure, IWT could potentially link directly production plants to the import and export hubs, thereby avoiding cities and densely polluted areas. The same could sometimes apply to the transportation of commuters to and from city centres to their workplaces and residential areas. The sector would need both investment and a well-trained and stable workforce, benefiting of quality employment.
31. The ILO had a vital role to play in promoting and encouraging investment by national and regional administrations. This would be essential to upgrade river infrastructure to make it more resilient. Secondly, at the current time, there was a different legislation applicable to workers in the stretches between transnational waterways that had allowed a complete deregulation of rights for some workers and had even led to the fact that employment contract were not concluded with the employees, resulting in undercutting high quality operators that provided decent employment and effective social dialogue through their companies. This could result in limiting the job opportunities for workers coming from nations that have decent employment as well as undermining responsible business which would otherwise be sustainable.
32. The sector should embrace the challenge of new technology, digitalization and the move to a more environmentally sustainable business operation; but a shortage of qualified crew in many countries had hampered further development. The sector should be promoted to attract young people. Good terms and conditions of employment were at the basis, but it was also important to promote reskilling and upskilling initiatives. The skills commonalities between seagoing workers and IWT workers should be considered in addressing the shortages where they existed. The sector should make efforts not only to appeal to young workers but also to women. The challenge was to ensure that necessary guidance could be provided for the structural changes needed on board to attract the new generation of IWW workers. This included accommodation and social connectivity for workers.
33. The Employer Vice-Chairperson stated that the IWW sector played a crucial role in transportation, especially in landlocked and low- and middle-income countries. Yet, the sector faced challenges due to market needs change, technological innovation, a lack of skilled workers and climate change. If left unaddressed, this could have significant implications for promoting full and productive employment and decent work.
34. The sector presented great development potential as it was underexploited and constituted a sustainable mode of transport which could help support the mitigation of climate change effects. Inland navigation had a much lower energy consumption than any other means of transport. The sector had the potential to be developed by governments, but investment would be needed for the sector to advance towards a just transition. In this sense, technological innovation could not only mitigate climate change effects but could also allow the sector to overcome the effects of climate change. IWT depended on water flows in rivers and water supply for canals, which in turn depended on the climate. However, climate change would and was already impacting these issues

and introducing new ones such as flooding, high flow velocities, low water levels, and reduced water supply and riverbank and river bed and bank erosions. Therefore climate change adaptation and mitigation had to become an integral part of the medium and long-term planning for the sector's development. Digitization of the IWW sector could enhance occupational safety and health (OSH) technology, by assisting workers in performing daily duties and supporting physical labour which could consequently reduce physical injuries associated with some tasks in the sector. Added to the benefits in OSH, a more sustainable and digital IWW sector would have an effect on the sector's workforce, including in terms of work-life balance, reducing the need for workers to be away from home for long periods of time. Positive work-life balance could help make the sector more attractive, particularly for workers with family responsibilities, women and workers with limited mobility. Technological advantages could also contribute to creating employment in the sector by rendering it more competitive than other means of transportation and making it grow.

35. Some of the challenges, if left unaddressed, could hinder the sector's growth, affecting employers, workers and governments. Firstly, the creation of enabling environments for sustainable enterprises was one of the main challenges. The ILO's Centenary Declaration had emphasized that the promotion of sustainable enterprises, was at the heart of the decent work paradigm. Secondly, the implementation of a greener technology and processes should entail adequate skills development policies. He recalled from the Report prepared by the Office that skill mismatches and widening skill gaps had been identified as major obstacles to the greening of enterprises. The harmonization of skills and training along the river system was critical for the success of transition towards a sustainable sector. Third, a greener sector required considerable investments that exceeded the sector's financial capacity. Many enterprises in the IWW sector were MSMEs, most of which were family-owned. Without the appropriate economic incentives and financial support, the turn towards greener and decarbonized IWT would hence have a major impact on the current operators in the sector, with many financially weak shipping companies being driven to cease operations in the future. Fourth, the IWW sector had significant informal activities, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America, given the elevated number of family-owned MSMEs, own-account workers and contributing family workers who made up the important part of the sector. The transition to a formalized IWW sector should be a priority for all ILO constituents. Moving the sector towards the formal economy would have a positive impact on employment, employment relationships and sustainability. Social dialogue could leverage the opportunities in the IWW sector and overcome the aforementioned challenges.
36. The Government Vice-Chairperson stated, concerning the scope of the meeting, that it was important to discuss all vessels not covered by the MLC, 2006, or by Convention No. 188, in order to avoid gaps in protection. Some governments had pointed out that consideration should also be given to the issue of port management and dock workers, but that was outside the remit of the meeting.
37. One of the main challenges in many countries was that education and training for IWT were not as developed as for seafarers. Although navigation was more complex in the IWW sector, more training and education for IWT workers were needed. The safety and health of IWT workers was essential and therefore vessels needed to constitute a safe, healthy and green work environment. Decent work deficits could also be found in terms of recruitment, wage levels, including minimum wage-setting, working time, OSH and social security. Levelling playing fields could help in tackling decent work deficits on board IWW vessels, often involving workers of different nationalities, especially on passenger vessels. Workers in the informal economy were sometimes not protected at all.

38. The transition to the formal economy represented a further challenge in some parts of the world. The sector also faced a talent leak to the maritime sector, in view of its higher salary and benefits levels. She stressed that the main obstacles to attracting women, in some parts of the world, included violence and harassment and poor maternity protection. Monitoring mechanisms, including labour inspection, could help in ensuring compliance with decent work requirements. Workers in the sector in some cases could not benefit from social dialogue and collective bargaining, as they were in the informal economy or self-employed. Climate change and technology improvements developed fast. While internet access contributed to the well-being of crew members, rapid digitalization could also lead to technological stress. The transition to greener ships could be expensive in some parts of the world; and the non-classification of vessels was challenging, as it was impossible to produce statistics distinguishing IWW vessels from maritime vessels.
39. There were many opportunities for the sector to contribute to sustainable development. Technological advances could improve law enforcement, eliminate paperwork and help in achieving higher safety standards. The ILO could contribute with guidance on international minimum working conditions for IWT personnel. Minimum international standards on the recruitment and retention of workers would be beneficial to attract women workers, and help in setting parameters for working time and social protection. This meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views and expertise to contribute to discussions on these common concerns.
40. The Worker Vice-Chairperson stated that all three constituents had underscored the importance of social dialogue. Yet, in many cases, workers could not benefit from social dialogue as a result of practices where shipowners used different flags to lower the standards of both vessels and employment. Education and skills certification were crucial to promote the sector.
41. The Employer Vice-Chairperson recalled that there were a large range of ILO standards already, and these could be applicable to domestic operations on IWW. Indeed, there was a difference in employment regimes between seafarers and IWT workers. All river commission had presented on regional standards and certifications initiatives, so the applicability of these standards would have to be considered. Governments played a fundamental role to design and apply social protection and social security schemes.

Discussion of point 2

Which policies, measures and practices have been effective, which have not worked, and what policies and institutions are required in order to promote decent work in the inland waterways sector, for example in terms of fundamental principles and rights at work, job creation, working conditions, just transition, attraction and retention of workers, sustainable enterprise development, formalization, social protection and social dialogue?

42. The Employer Vice-Chairperson reiterated the substantial potential of the IWW sector in advancing a just transition by providing a safer mode of transport, and fostering significant economic development. An enabling business environment to support sustainable enterprises and promote decent work was considered of critical importance. Recognizing the diverse nature of regional economies and contexts, tailored intervention strategies, policy measures, and incentives specific to each waterway basin were necessary. While the role of river commissions in governing the IWW sector was acknowledged, a cautionary note was made to prevent any overlap between the ILO and these specialized organizations. Key points for sectoral improvement included the promotion of formalized policies facilitating the transition from informal to formal economies. The 2007 [Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the International Labour Conference](#) and the [Transition from the Informal to the Formal](#)

[Economy Recommendation, 2015 \(No. 204\)](#), provided a sound basis for achieving a greener, safer, and developed sector. To access finance, MSMEs and own-account workers should be able to benefit of fiscal incentives, subsidies, loans, and guarantees. These measures were identified as potential stimuli for MSMEs and own-account workers to transition from informality.

43. Member States were responsible for designing, extending, and enforcing social protection schemes, as well as for advocating for formalization policies that incentivized MSMEs. In 2021, the [Recurrent discussion on social protection](#) concluded that Member States should commit to establishing and maintaining universal, comprehensive, sustainable, and adequate social protection systems through robust social dialogue. Bilateral and multilateral social security agreements among States sharing the same waterway basin could facilitate worker access to healthcare protection. Effective social dialogue allowed for adjustments in response to the evolving world of work through cooperation among governments, workers, and employers. Social dialogue constituted a mechanism for continuous needs assessments to assist the sector's stakeholders.
44. In terms of skills development, the essential nature of investment in green and operational technology, inclusive educational programmes, and continuous lifelong learning could support the management of education programmes, particularly in line with the recently adopted the [Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 \(No. 208\)](#). With only 8 per cent of female workers, promoting a gender-inclusive sector and addressing the underrepresentation of women constituted another key aspect. Combating violence and harassment within the sector was an imperative. Tackling OSH challenges required national policies that prioritized preventive approaches, by managing emerging risks and investing in capacity development and training. The scarcity of data in the sector required improved data collection to inform evidence-based decision-making and to monitor the effectiveness of policies in both the short and long-term.
45. The Worker Vice-Chairperson highlighted that there were parallels between the experiences of the shipping industry and the IWW sector. The MLC, 2006, as amended, was a direct result of collaboration between social partners and regulatory organizations. A similar objective should be envisaged at the global level for achieving decent employment in the IWW sector. While prevailing standards were primarily technical, they were a foundation for expanding into areas such as working conditions, health, safety, and fair employment principles. Key steps to start regulating the industry included harmonizing certification, ensuring operational crewing, implementing apprenticeship and training programmes, and conducting labour inspections. The ILO's international labour standards, social dialogue, and collective bargaining represented the basis when considering new regulations. It was crucial to start establishing minimum floors to consider mirroring the MLC, 2006, as amended. Standard employment agreements based on the ILO FPRW and the MLC, 2006, for seafarers, could provide guidance for minimum wages, leave policies, labour and social protection, working hours, and safety and health regulations.
46. Dialogue and cooperation among social partners could foster the establishment of general just transition principles and opportunities for this global industry. This collaborative process could represent a catalyst for improved performance and risk management during the transition towards a more sustainable industry. This could translate into supporting careers both onboard and ashore of IWT workers by creating mobility frameworks and a basis for transferable skills throughout their time onboard, thereby preparing them for a career ashore. The anticipation was that such an approach would stimulate interest among the next generation of IWT workers, addressing the industry's challenge of having a low percentage of women involved. There was also a need to ensure that decarbonization plans, including the required investment, were aligned with the [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#) by supporting national administrations through bilateral and multilateral

development plans. These could also foster equitable training models for all IWT workers to keep pace with technological advancements and alternative fuels. An agreed-upon unified industry position that stressed the industry's essential role in the process of climate change could help avoiding uncertainty on crucial matters such as alternative fuels, worker sourcing and training, service retention, and preventing unfair competition. Such uncertainties could unbalance the market and have adverse effects on the sustainability of both companies and the sector.

47. The Government Vice-Chairperson emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts among governments, workers and employers in establishing minimum standards within national regulatory frameworks for the IWW sector. Key focus areas included regulations for working time and rest periods, aiming to prevent fatigue and ensure work-life balance. Some additional aspects, including prohibiting night work for minors, maintaining records distinguishing working time from standby time and the specific challenges of cruise workers, could be considered. The existing international maritime framework with its four pillars could be used as a potential source of inspiration, as some countries applied shipping laws to IWT workers. In terms of institutional measures, recommendations included establishing control mechanisms for intermediaries, particularly recruitment and placement agencies, with a focus on eliminating the burden of costs on workers and to implement protective measures against exploitation. Regular inspections could ensure adequate enforcement and compliance. Collaborative efforts among governments, workers and employers were essential for setting minimum wages, and the recognition of education and training skills. For example, as a result of a Directive of the European Union, the Netherlands prescribed specific qualifications and exams. In the case of the Philippines, the Government had established oversight by a professional regulation commission.
48. Welfare facilities and the provision of essential services were to be envisaged taking into consideration the proximity of IWT to land-based facilities. Positive models existed, including the waterborne services in China on the Yangtze and Pearl rivers. Attraction and retention efforts needed to remain a key objective by engaging with schools, for example. The efforts to decarbonize the sector needed to be accompanied by adaptation strategies within the development plans for the IWW sector. The well-being of workers also depended on adequate social insurance.
49. The Government representative of China provided an example of waterborne service centres. Approximately ten were accessible on the Yangtze River; these were located in the middle of the river and resembled rest stops in the highway system for truck drivers. Some of the services provided to workers included bunkering, restaurants, fresh water, postal services, entertainment, maritime formalities, and maintenance services. These centres served as a way for workers to enjoy their off-duty time, in addition to performing essential tasks such as collecting sewage and garbage from vessels, contributing effectively to environmental protection. The initial setup of the centres involved government funding and planning, followed by handover to enterprises for maintenance. These waterborne centres had had a positive impact on attracting and retaining workers and enhancing safety in the sector.
50. The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized that data collection for the IWW sector was a process that would require time.

Discussion of point 3

Taking into account the International Labour Organization's mandate, and the diversity across regions and local context in the inland waterways sector, what recommendations can be made for future action by the Office and the ILO Constituents (governments and employers' and workers' organizations) in the inland waterways sector? What should be the ILO's priorities in order to assist constituents to capitalize on the opportunities?

51. The Worker Vice-Chairperson reiterated that the IWW sector did not benefit from a sectoral international instrument but instead relied on regional and national rules and legislation. The sector's importance in enabling global supply chains and connecting communities supported overall economic development, and more so the development and connectivity of rural areas connected by IWW. The ILO's engagement with other international commissions, including the UNECE and the ESCAP, and the DC, the CCNR and the CICOS among others, would be essential to ensure the promotion of decent work, and the inclusion of social partners in the discussions of key importance to level playing fields for sustainable enterprises in the sector. In order to address the concerns related to skills, he proposed that a road map for skills in the sector could be facilitated by the ILO, in collaboration with the International Training Centre (ITCILO), and, for example, the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) in Latin America and the Education in Inland Navigation (EDINNA) centre in Europe. An important step forward would also include the consultation and harmonization of this road map with IMO. The involvement of ILO country offices located in areas that relied heavily on IWT would be crucial.
52. There was a need to further promote, respect and realize the FPRW in the IWW sector. Enterprises also had a responsibility to respect labour rights in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the ILO's Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration), most recently amended in 2022. In this sense, the list of ILO Conventions and Recommendations included in the annex to the Report for discussion constituted a basis for the minimum international standards applicable to the sector, and he asked the Office to include the list as an appendix to the draft conclusions. Some concerns remained as to the implementation and verification of the principles and rights included in some of these Conventions, in particular those in relation to the right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, as well as the inspection of the contractual rights for workers. National and trade union labour inspectors played a fundamental role in implementing workers' rights.
53. [Informal document No. 1](#) highlighted the lack of ILO work on the IWW sector since 1992. This should not become a trend in years to come, and the establishment of a new inland transport committee or exploring other options that could allow regular discussions on transport topics, would be beneficial. A technical meeting to elaborate on best practices in the sector could constitute a first step to the creation of international minimum standards for the IWW sector, on issues such as OSH, contractual arrangements and industrial relations. Tripartite regional forums could also help in the promotion of tripartite consultations in the sector and of bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements between members that share waterways for the transportation of goods and passengers. The Office was encouraged to further engage with the social partners with the aim of promoting rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.
54. The Employer Vice-Chairperson noted the convergence among the groups regarding the sector's potential to create decent jobs, despite its small scale globally. There was need for action to leverage the sector's potential for environmental sustainability through formalization, innovation, and investment to ensure sustainable economic growth and resilience. His group's recommendations included: sector-specific data collection and research; the promotion of

formalization, in accordance with the principles in ILO Recommendation No. 204, as informality had been recognized as a structural problem; the development of skills through collaboration to identify skill needs and developing coherent and supportive labour market policies; access to finance and the creation of enabling environments for sustainable enterprises; and improved access to social protection and social security schemes in accordance with the [Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 \(No. 202\)](#).

55. Social dialogue was highlighted as essential for effective labour protection and tackling informality. Governments, with ILO support, were encouraged to develop coherent policy responses. The importance of efforts to improve equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women was stressed. He called on governments to ratify the [Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 \(No. 190\)](#), and ensure its effective implementation.
56. The Office was recommended to strengthen support for harnessing digital technologies to improve working conditions and enhance OSH, particularly for MSMEs. The provision of technical assistance for sustainable industrial and sectoral policies would facilitate a just transition to environmental sustainability and the circular economy. The ILO and its members could play a pivotal role in optimizing the IWW sector, making it attractive to workers through the promotion of decent work. He encouraged these changes through collaboration to find sustainable solutions for realizing the sector's full potential.
57. The Government Vice-Chairperson emphasized that it was crucial for governments, employers and workers to uphold fundamental ILO Conventions in the sector. The importance of collaborative efforts at all levels and in various forms could help in further promoting decent work in the IWW sector. There was a need to work towards establishing regional partnerships, for example with river commissions. The ILO should foster increased social dialogue within the sector, promote the ratification and better implementation of existing instruments relevant to the sector, and provide technical assistance and support across all levels and forms to advance decent work in IWT.
58. Her proposals included convening regional or subregional meetings to disseminate the outcomes of the discussions at the regional and national levels. She agreed with the Workers' group suggestion for another technical meeting for further discussion. The promotion of decent work in the IWW sector should happen through collaboration and coordinated efforts among stakeholders.
59. The Government representative of Panama highlighted that this meeting had been long overdue and was of particular interest to States with long coastlines. Panama had 50 per cent of its borders along coasts. The Panama Canal provided a fundamental corridor to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. He recalled that at the discussion regarding this meeting during the Sectoral Advisory Bodies' review, he had underlined that the meeting's focus should be internal navigation but not large-scale water bodies serving international trade, such as the Panama Canal.
60. He asserted that wages in the Canal were equivalent to those in the United States because of the historical context of the Canal's construction and ownership. Workers in the Canal benefited from the right to organize, as included in the six collective agreements that provided coverage to those workers, and that were managed by a conciliatory body unique to the Panama Canal. While Panama had ratified the MLC, 2006, as amended, his Government had specifically excluded the Panama Canal of its coverage since the regulation of working hours, overtime and OSH, for example, was included within these particular collective agreements. Workers in the Canal benefited from the national regulatory framework for internal navigation, including domestic services, and the involvement of associations, cooperatives, and unions.

61. The Government representative of Algeria expressed support for efforts aimed at promoting a positive image of the sector, emphasizing the importance of decent working conditions, especially for young workers. It would be crucial to eliminate gender discrimination through policies and measures fostering gender equality, inclusive environments and employment opportunities for women in IWT. Labour shortages could be tackled if mechanisms were put in place to enhance workforce flexibility while safeguarding workers' rights. Training and vocational programmes for IWT could include advocating for mutual recognition of vocational training certificates to facilitate worker mobility. But it was also vital to ensure decent working conditions, including core labour rights such as OSH and the right to organize. Governments played a crucial role in implementing and monitoring national legislation to promote decent working conditions. The improvement of labour standards in the sector could also focus on combating informality and protecting the rights of workers, particularly migrant workers.
62. The Worker Vice-Chairperson invited the Panama Canal Authority to more actively engage with maritime unions in Panama, and more specifically with the Unión de Capitanes y Oficiales de Cubierta. Meaningful communication on issues related to safety and training could help in bridging a gap that had persisted for years.
63. The Government representative of Panama referred to the ITF request to mediate in worker-employer negotiations, involving captains and the administration of the Panama Canal. He clarified that the union of tugboat captains of the Panama Canal regularly negotiated collective agreements, including to address issues related to training. The training regulations were not only in the collective agreement but also enshrined in the regulations of the Panama Canal, that had as a basis the United States Coast Guard Regulations. The uniqueness of the Panama Canal made it subject to certain constitutional limitations in view of the treaty ensuring its neutrality. Therefore, negotiations were typically bilateral between union representatives and the Panama Canal Authority.
64. The Employer Vice-Chairperson began by expressing full support for the Government of Panama as his group had discussed that the Panama Canal, like the Suez Canal, represented a unique corridor falling outside the scope of the MLC, 2006, as amended. He expressed concern regarding previous statements comparing IWT to shipping, and that the MLC, 2006, as amended could be applied to the sector. The latter had been designed specifically for seafarers, and was not applicable to the unique structure and working environment of IWT. The MLC, 2006, as amended, had been designed for formalized deep-sea operations and the shipping sector, and did not represent a good fit for the less formalized nature of IWT.
65. There were many challenges in applying a global standard to a sector with limited data and varying employment relationships. The sector needed to be better understood but the lack of data and harmonization made it challenging to apply a global standard. States were encouraged to enforce labour standards already adopted at the national level, and make appropriate investments into their domestic workforce. There were ongoing efforts in regions such as the Rhine, Danube, China, and the Congo to address traffic moving through rivers and different States, and to harmonize existing ILO Conventions in those corridors. More data was needed before considering any new instruments for regulating IWT.
66. The Worker Vice-Chairperson clarified that he had previously mentioned the MLC, 2006, as amended, to highlight that a similar legal instrument could prove beneficial for IWT, as the workers in the sector were not specifically covered by any sectoral Convention.
67. The Government Vice-Chairperson stated that her group had no position on the discussion on the Panama Canal. She highlighted that it was important to avoid gaps, and that therefore the meeting's discussions should focus on vessels that were not covered by the MLC, 2006, as amended, or Convention No. 188.

► Consideration and adoption of the draft conclusions and recommendations

68. At its third sitting, and in accordance with the provisions of article 13 of the Standing Orders for technical meetings, the meeting set up a Working Party to prepare draft conclusions taking into account the various views, proposals and suggestions made during the discussion in the meeting.
69. The Working Party was chaired by the Chairperson, Mr H. Munthe (Employer, Norway), and was composed of the following members:

Government members

Netherlands:	Ms J. Kliest
<i>Adviser:</i>	Mr R. Noteboom
Panama	Mr C. A. Gómez
Philippines	Ms M. Z. E. A. Campita
<i>Adviser:</i>	Mr A. E. Gutib
Spain	Mr E. Casanova Pardo
<i>Adviser:</i>	Ms A. Valcárcel

Employer members

Vice-Chairperson:	Mr J. Beckett
	Ms R. Appiah
	Ms C. H. Fonseca
	Mr L. F. Rocha
<i>Adviser:</i>	Ms N. Privee Boudeger

Worker members

Vice-chairperson:	Mr Y. Sukhorukov
	Ms T. Mast
	Mr N. Bramley
	Mr M. Moreno
<i>Advisers:</i>	Ms M. T. Llanos
	Mr F. Barcellona

70. The draft conclusions (TMIWS/2023/08), as revised by the Working Party, were submitted to the meeting for adoption at its fifth sitting.

Draft conclusions and recommendations

Opportunities and challenges for advancing decent work in the inland waterways sector

Proposed paragraphs 1 and 2

71. Paragraphs 1 and 2 were approved.

Proposed new paragraph after paragraph 2

72. The new paragraph 2 *bis* was approved.

Proposed paragraph 3

73. Paragraph 3 was approved.

Proposed new paragraph after paragraph 3

74. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by a small, informal tripartite group that had met after the Working Party to consult on elements of the draft conclusions where consensus had not been reached. The informal group had agreed to revise the end of the paragraph to insert the text “in all its forms and at all levels including collective bargaining”. All groups agreed on it.
75. The new paragraph 3 *bis*, as amended, was approved.

Proposed paragraphs 4 and 5

76. Paragraphs 4 and 5 were approved.

Proposed paragraph 6

77. The Chairperson presented the following compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group: “The ability to attract and retain skilled workers in the IWW sector, especially youth and women, is crucial for the sustainability of the sector. Decent working and living conditions, social infrastructure, improving skill sets, adoption of technology, elimination of all forms of discrimination, and adequate remuneration, along with skill recognition, work-life balance and social connectivity, are key to improve the attractiveness of the sector.”
78. The Worker Vice-Chairperson explained that the meaning of the term “social infrastructure” had been clarified during the small informal tripartite group to be understood as “the policies, resources and services that ensure people can participate in productive social and economic activities”. The Employer Vice-Chairperson accepted the inclusion of the concept of work-life balance.
79. Paragraph 6, as amended, was approved.

What needs to be done to move towards decent work in the inland waterways sector

Proposed new paragraph after paragraph 6

- 80. The Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read "Considering all the different regional regulations and practices in place, and inspired from best practices, these conclusions and recommendations are aimed at improving the working conditions in the sector."
- 81. The new paragraph 6 *bis*, as amended, was approved.

Proposed paragraphs 7 to 9, new paragraph 9 bis, and 10 to 13

- 82. Paragraphs 7, 8, 9, new paragraph 9 *bis*, 10, 11, 12 and 13 were approved.

Proposed paragraph 14

- 83. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented the following compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to be added as a second sentence to this paragraph: "The conclusions and recommendations can be implemented while data is collected."
- 84. Paragraph 14 was approved as amended.

Recommendations for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members

Proposed paragraph 15

Proposed chapeau

- 85. The proposed chapeau was approved.

Proposed clauses (a) and (b)

- 86. Clauses (a) and (b) were approved.

Proposed clause (c)

- 87. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to be added at the end of the clause, which read as follows: "and establishment of social protection floors where they do not exist and extension of social security coverage". This text would be more aligned with Recommendation No. 204).
- 88. Clause (c) was approved as amended.

Proposed clauses (d) and (e)

- 89. Clauses (d) and (e) were approved.

Proposed clause (f)

- 90. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: "engage in effective social dialogue in all its forms and at all levels including collective bargaining, including at sectoral and cross-border levels, to advance decent work in the IWW sector". He also requested the Office to conduct editorial changes in the note of proceedings and conclusions for a more consistent use of the terms IWT and IWW.

91. Clause (f) was approved as amended.

Proposed clauses (g) to (l)

92. Clauses (g) to (l) were approved.

Proposed clause (m)

93. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: “promote economic growth and create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, especially MSMEs, in order to generate decent work, productive employment and improved living standards for all; and”

94. Clause (m) was approved as amended.

Proposed clause (n)

95. The Worker Vice-Chairperson explained that in the small informal tripartite group it had been agreed to delete the words “in their supply chains” and in lieu insert “in the recruitment and employment process» after the words “labour rights”.

96. Clause (n) was approved as amended.

Proposed paragraph 16

Proposed clause (a)

97. Clause (a) was approved.

Proposed clause (b)

Proposed subclauses (i) to (iii)

98. Subclauses (i) to (iii) were approved.

Proposed subclause (iv)

99. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: “designing policies to promote more sustainable enterprises grounded in the decent work agenda”.

100. Subclause (iv) was approved as amended.

Proposed clause (c)

101. Clause (c) was approved.

Proposed clause (d)

102. The Employer Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: “regularly collect reliable data, gather statistics, including from river commissions, and conduct research on employment trends in IWT, as well as support governments’ efforts to collect data on the sector;”

103. Clause (d) was approved as amended.

Proposed clause (e)

104. Clause (e) was approved.

Proposed clause (f)

105. The Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: “develop and strengthen partnerships with river commissions and regional economic commissions, involving the social partners, to foster policy coherence; and organize tripartite forums to promote cooperation among riparian States in the regions, with a view to advancing decent work in the IWW sector; and”

106. Clause (f) was approved as amended.

Proposed clause (g)

107. The Worker Vice-Chairperson presented a compromise text, agreed by the small informal tripartite group to read: “establish, in consultation with the constituents and regional offices, a clear roadmap and timetable for regional follow-up and ask the sectoral advisory bodies to consider convening a follow-up meeting”.

108. Clause (g) was approved as amended.

Proposed clause (h)

109. Clause (h) was approved.

Appendix

110. The appendix as a whole was approved.

Conclusions and recommendations

111. The Technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the IWW sector unanimously adopted the [Conclusions and recommendations \(TMIWS/2023/9\)](#), as amended, as a whole.

► Closure of the meeting

The Secretary-General of the meeting congratulated all participants for a constructive dialogue maintained throughout the week, and expressed gratitude to the Chairperson for his leadership. The adopted Conclusions provided clear guidance for action, including at the regional level. The Office had already begun exploring more effective collaboration with ILO field offices in the organisation and follow-up to sectoral meetings. Information sessions will be organized for the regions. Furthermore, the Office will explore structural approaches to respond to the call for collaboration between ITCILO and the Office which had been reiterated in the conclusions of recent sectoral meetings. The Note on the proceedings would be presented to the Governing Body for consideration at its next session in March 2024.

The Worker Vice-Chairperson expressed gratitude to the Chairperson and all participants. The primary objective of the meeting had been to promote the potential of the IWW sector through decent work. It was crucial to focus on attracting the next generation of young professionals while accelerating gender equality and the more active participation of women in IWT. The industry could elevate its status through investment in new technology and pursue a just transition by using more environmentally friendly vessels and fuels. Regional social dialogue would be important to address issues vital for improving the working and living conditions. The MLC, 2006, as amended, served as an important reference for employment standards, without compromising existing regional and national regulations and practices. Other instruments, including those under the purview of the IMO, could also serve as a reference for the sector. He highlighted the importance of the ILO [Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 \(No. 135\)](#), and the [Workers' Representatives Recommendation, 1971 \(No. 143\)](#), with regard to trade union facilities, access to workplaces, and protections for trade union representatives. Continued cooperation and partnership among workers, employers and governments could pave the way for the improvement of the welfare, and living and working conditions of IWT workers.

The Employer Vice-Chairperson thanked the Chairperson for his guidance and neutrality, and expressed much appreciation for the frank and open dialogue that had pervaded among the Vice-Chairpersons, and that had ensured the meeting's success. While often overlooked, IWT workers represented an essential workforce ensuring the movement of goods in a number of regions. Referring more generally to the shipping sector that ensured the efficient movement of the majority of goods in the world, he commended the ITF for playing an invisible but important role to level playing fields among employer communities. Finally, he expressed his deep gratitude to the IOE and the Bureau for Employers' Activities.

The Government Vice-Chairperson thanked the Office for organizing the meeting, which had provided an excellent opportunity to address important matters and working conditions in the IWW sector. She expressed gratitude to the Vice-Chairpersons for their engaged and constructive discussions. The meeting had demonstrated that tripartite cooperation and social dialogue produced solid Conclusions and recommendations for years to come.

The Government representative of Panama expressed satisfaction on the outcomes of the meeting. While social dialogue had been put to a test in recent Governing Body sessions, the present meeting demonstrated that tripartite discussions conducted in the spirit of effective social dialogue and consensus-building, eventually culminated in consensus.

The Chairperson, expressing thanks to the Office for its support and to all participants for the good spirit of the deliberations during the meeting, declared the Technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the IWW sector closed.

► Conclusions and recommendations

The Technical meeting on decent and sustainable work in the inland waterways sector,
Having met in Geneva from 20–24 November 2023,
Adopts the following conclusions and recommendations: ¹

Opportunities and challenges for advancing decent work in the inland waterways sector

1. The inland waterways (IWW) sector plays an important role for the transport of passengers and goods and for the sustainable social and economic development of many countries, especially landlocked countries. Inland water transport is an environmentally sustainable mode of transport and, being underexploited, presents great development potential. Inland water transport (IWT) workers are key workers and are essential for the safety and environmental sustainability of the sector, and therefore their conditions of work are important.
2. Due to the geographical and water environment characteristics of inland waterways, there are good possibilities for applying new technologies and green emission reduction technologies in the IWW sector. Investment in infrastructure and green technologies can support mitigation of adverse effects on climate change and facilitate a more efficient mode of transport. At the same time, the process of decarbonization could give rise to skills gaps and potential safety risks. In the meantime, the IWW sector is also confronted with rapid technological advances, which may make the sector more competitive, safe and attractive. On the other hand, technological innovation will require new or enhanced skills and may give rise to technostress.
3. Experiences from international labour Conventions can serve as an important source of inspiration for advancing decent work of IWT workers.
4. Vessels need to constitute a safe and healthy working environment with the goal of becoming accident and disease-free. Decent work challenges exist in some regions for example in the tug, bulk, breakbulk, container, tanker and passenger vessel subsectors and with respect to hospitality and entertainment personnel on passenger vessels. Challenges relate to education and training, occupational safety and health, working time, operational crewing levels, recruitment process and employment practices, wages and other forms of remuneration, and social security.
5. A lack of effective transnational and national legal frameworks for the IWW sector, as well as differences in legislation along transnational waterways, can lead to unfair competition and hamper effective social dialogue in all its forms and at all levels including collective bargaining.
6. High informality in the sector is a structural issue that poses challenges in ensuring the application of labour law and the provision of social protection. Since informality in the sector still exists, transition to formality should be a priority. The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly negative impact on workers and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the informal economy.

¹ In accordance with established procedures, these conclusions will be submitted to the 350th Session of the Governing Body of the ILO (March 2024) for its consideration.

7. Social dialogue, based on respect of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining for all IWT workers, can lead to tangible improvement of working conditions. Social partners, including at the sectoral level, can also leverage the opportunities and overcome challenges with respect to just transition and transition to the formal economy in the IWW sector. Social dialogue in all its forms and at all levels should be encouraged, in such a way that it respects collective bargaining and its outcomes.
8. The ability to attract and retain skilled workers in the IWW sector, especially youth and women, is crucial for the sustainability of the sector. Decent working and living conditions, social infrastructure, improving skill sets, adoption of technology, elimination of all forms of discrimination, and adequate remuneration, along with skill recognition, work-life balance and social connectivity, are key to improve the attractiveness of the sector.

What needs to be done to move towards decent work in the inland waterways sector

9. Considering all the different regional regulations and practices in place, and inspired from best practices, these conclusions and recommendations are aimed at improving the working conditions in the sector.
10. Effective regulations in the IWW sector for all workers are important in areas such as working and rest times, medical care, social protection, repatriation, wages, contracts, operational crewing levels, duration of service on board, minimum age, medical examination, recruitment, occupational safety and health, maternity protection and elimination of any form of violence and harassment. Enforcement, including through regular inspection of vessels and living and working conditions on board, is key to establish a level-playing field.
11. Harmonization of relevant regulations at the regional level and amongst the riparian states, to improve living and working conditions, should be encouraged. Generally applicable international labour standards should be effectively applied to the IWW sector via national laws, regulations, or other measures taking into account the specificities of the sector.
12. Measures to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises in the sector, especially for MSMEs, are essential, in order to increase productivity, create quality jobs and improve decent work opportunities. This should include support from governments and better access to finance, according to national circumstances.
13. The establishment or improvement of regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions is crucial for the realization of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining in the sector, in particular with the goal, appropriate to national conditions, to encourage and promote the full development and utilization of machinery for voluntary negotiation between employers or employers' organizations and workers' organizations with a view to the regulation of terms and conditions of employment by means of collective agreements.
14. Skills gaps should be monitored and anticipated, and curricula updated and tailored to the needs of the sector. Skill development for IWT workers should recognize the commonalities with seafarers, including their training and service record books, while reflecting the complexities of inland navigation. Education and training programmes should be gender-responsive and inclusive for vulnerable groups, including migrant workers. Cross-border recognition of skills and harmonization of qualifications are key to foster safety and labour mobility.
15. A just transition in the IWW sector calls for effective policy measures and investments to address training, reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning needs triggered by alternative fuels and new

technologies. Enterprises, especially MSMEs, including in the informal economy, will need financial support or other adequate resources to ensure a just transition and harness the fullest potential of technological progress. Effective social dialogue and cooperation among governments, industry, workers, and academia ensures a safe, equitable and human-centred approach to a just transition towards a decarbonized IWW sector.

16. Transition to the formal economy should be promoted, including through provision of incentives for the formalization of MSMEs in the informal IWW sector, and ensuring that workers' and employers' organizations are involved in related social dialogue processes.
17. Efforts to progressively build and maintain universal, comprehensive, sustainable, and adequate social protection systems should be underpinned by social dialogue and be inclusive of all workers and enterprises in the IWW sector.
18. Better data and statistics, such as on types of vessels and categories of workers, are needed for evidence-based policy solutions to address the root causes for decent work challenges in the IWW sector, considering the diversity among countries and regions. The conclusions and recommendations can be implemented while data is collected.

Recommendations for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members

19. Governments, employers' and workers' organizations, as appropriate to their spheres of responsibility, should:
 - (a) Adopt, review, implement and enforce national and transnational laws and regulations, with due regard to the specific characteristics of the sector, to ensure that fundamental principles and rights at work and ratified international labour Conventions protect and are effectively applied to all workers in the IWW sector;
 - (b) endeavour to provide universal access to comprehensive, sustainable and adequate social protection systems for workers in the IWW sector, regardless of nationality, and make arrangements with a view to securing their access to social protection through effective coordination of social security systems, including by way of concluding bilateral or multilateral social security agreements;
 - (c) facilitate progressive transition to formality, including provision of incentives for the formalization of MSMEs, developing skills policies that support lifelong learning and recognize prior learning, and establishment of social protection floors where they do not exist and extension of social security coverage;
 - (d) strengthen systems of inspection of labour conditions on board IWW vessels, including through adequate resources, qualified inspectors and harmonization of inspections amongst riparian states;
 - (e) promote the creation, attraction and retention of decent jobs in the IWW sector, through tripartite regional dialogue to establish measures that facilitate access to the industry, including safe and equal employment opportunities for youth and women;
 - (f) engage in effective social dialogue in all its forms and at all levels including collective bargaining, including at sectoral and cross-border levels, to advance decent work in the IWW sector;

- (g) collect and report sectoral employment data and administrative statistics on the IWW sector, including where possible the digital registration of all workers, labour force surveys and records of occupational accidents and diseases;
- (h) regularly evaluate current and future skills needs for IWT workers and employers, address skill gaps through design, review or implementation of training, reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning strategies and provide appropriate support on all levels for skill development initiatives, vocational training and apprenticeships;
- (i) collaborate on cross-border recognition of skills and create a system for the harmonization of training and certification requirements;
- (j) foster a just transition in the sector, including by providing for adequate policy and regulatory frameworks, funding, and supporting sustainable investment;
- (k) engage with relevant regional stakeholders, including river commissions, to promote decent work in the IWW sector;
- (l) take steps towards the ratification of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) and ensure its effective implementation in the sector;
- (m) promote economic growth and create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, especially MSMEs, in order to generate decent work, productive employment and improved living standards for all; and
- (n) take appropriate steps to ensure that enterprises in the IWW sector respect human and labour rights in the recruitment and employment process, in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, and to comply with national law wherever they operate.

20. The Office should:

- (a) promote the ratification of international labour Conventions and the effective implementation of the international labour standards and other ILO instruments relevant to the IWW sector (see appendix);
- (b) strengthen the capacity of its tripartite constituents in the sector, including in collaboration with the ILO International Training Centre (ITC-ILO), on:
 - (i) fundamental principles and rights at work;
 - (ii) social protection;
 - (iii) social dialogue to advance decent work, facilitate transition to formality and achieve just transition; and
 - (iv) designing policies to promote more sustainable enterprises grounded in the Decent Work Agenda.
- (c) support constituents in assessing skills needs and in designing and implementing skills, reskilling, apprenticeships and lifelong learning schemes in the sector, in collaboration with ITC-ILO, Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) and Education in Inland Navigation (EDINNA) network, and in consultation with UN bodies and agencies;

- (d) regularly collect reliable data, gather statistics, including from river commissions, and conduct research on employment trends, as well as support governments' efforts to collect data on the IWW sector;
- (e) maintain periodic tripartite dialogue on the IWW sector to progress the conclusions and recommendations reached at the meeting and provide direction;
- (f) develop and strengthen partnerships with river commissions and regional economic commissions, involving the social partners, to foster policy coherence; and organize tripartite forums to promote cooperation among riparian States in the regions, with a view to advancing decent work in the IWW sector;
- (g) establish, in consultation with the constituents and regional offices, a clear roadmap and timetable for regional follow-up and ask the sectoral advisory bodies to consider convening a follow-up meeting; and
- (h) provide technical assistance to constituents to implement sectoral policies and initiatives on formalization, just transition and use of technology to advance decent work in the IWW sector.

Appendix

Non-exhaustive reference list of ILO standards, declarations and guidance, and other international instruments relevant to the inland waterways sector

International labour standards

Fundamental Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), its 2014 Protocol, the Forced Labour (Indirect Compulsion) Recommendation, 1930 (No. 35), and the Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and the Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90)
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146)
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)

Governance Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), and the Labour Inspection Recommendation, 1947 (No. 81), and the Labour Inspection (Mining and Transport) Recommendation, 1947 (No. 82)
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), the Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122), and the Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
- Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129), and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1969 (No. 133)
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), and the Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152)

Technical Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77), and the Medical Examination of Young Persons Recommendation, 1946 (No. 79)
- Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94), and the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Recommendation, 1949 (No. 84)
- Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), and the Protection of Wages Recommendation, 1949 (No. 85)
- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), and the Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)
- Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121), and the Employment Injury Benefits Recommendation, 1964 (No. 121)
- Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130), and the Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Recommendation, 1969 (No. 134)
- Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131), and the Minimum Wage Fixing Recommendation, 1970 (No. 135)
- Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), and the Workers' Representatives Recommendation, 1971 (No. 143)
- Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140), and the Paid Educational Leave Recommendation, 1974 (No. 148)
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), and the Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151)
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), and the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148), and the Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Recommendation, 1977 (No. 156)
- Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151), and the Labour Relations (Public Service) Recommendation, 1978 (No. 159)
- Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154), and the Collective Bargaining Recommendation, 1981 (No. 163)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (No. 165)
- Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157), and the Maintenance of Social Security Rights Recommendation, 1983 (No. 167)
- Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158), and the Termination of Employment Recommendation, 1982 (No. 166)

- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159), and the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation, 1983 (No. 168)
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
- Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No.160), and the Labour Statistics Recommendation, 1985 (No. 170)
- Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and the Chemicals Recommendation, 1990 (No. 177)
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161), and the Occupational Health Services Recommendation, 1985 (No. 171)
- Protection of Workers' Claims (Employer's Insolvency) Convention, 1992 (No. 173), and the Protection of Workers' Claims (Employer's Insolvency) Recommendation, 1992 (No. 180)
- Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175), and the Part-Time Work Recommendation, 1994 (No. 182)
- Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), and the Private Employment Agencies Recommendation, 1997 (No. 188)
- Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and the Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191)
- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), and the Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 (No. 206)

Technical Recommendations

- Hours of Work (Inland Navigation) Recommendation, 1920 (No. 8)
- Voluntary Conciliation and Arbitration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 92)
- Co-operation at the Level of the Undertaking Recommendation, 1952 (No. 94)
- Communications within the Undertaking Recommendation, 1967 (No. 129)
- Examination of Grievances Recommendation, 1967 (No. 130)
- Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Recommendation, 1988 (No. 176)
- Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
- List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194)
- Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198)
- HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200)
- Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)
- Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)
- Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
- Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208)

Conclusions, declarations and resolutions

- [ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up](#), 1998, as amended in 2022
- [ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization](#), 2008, as amended in 2022
- [ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#), 2019
- [Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy](#), 2017, as amended in 2022
- [Resolution concerning a global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient](#), 2021
- [Resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation](#), 2015
- [Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises](#), 2007
- [Resolution concerning skills and lifelong learning](#), 2021
- [Resolution on recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact](#), 2009, as amended in 2022
- [Resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#), 2023

ILO guidance

- [Guidelines on general principles of labour inspection](#), 2022
- [General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and Definition of recruitment fees and related costs](#), 2019
- [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#), 2015
- [Protection of workers' personal data: An ILO code of practice](#), 1997

Other international instrument

- United Nations, [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), 2011