

**Joint Conclusions
of the 11th High Level Meeting between the International Labour Office and
the European Commission**

Geneva, 10-11 April 2014

On the 10-11 April 2014 in Geneva, the International Labour Office and the European Commission held their 11th High Level Meeting since the renewal of their Exchange of Letters in 2001. The Meeting was also an opportunity to build upon the Strategic Partnership in the field of development cooperation signed in 2004 between both institutions.

Led by the commitment to maintain their well-established and many-sided cooperation and adapt it to new challenges, the ILO and the European Commission engaged in in-depth discussions over policy developments affecting the world of work. They have noted with interest that their joint cooperation has led to tangible improvements in the world of work.

Visions and policy priorities were shared; programmes and activities were discussed with the view to identify guiding elements for a sound ILO-EU cooperation over the year ahead.

Representatives of ILO and the European Commission highly appreciated the open and constructive discussions of both the technical and the high level day of the HLM which convincingly demonstrated the commitment of both organizations to work closely together on issues of common concerns and interest.

The following Operational Conclusions were agreed as outcome of the HLM, shaping the policy context for ILO-EC cooperation until their next High Level Meeting. The attached participants' list and the jointly agreed agenda of the two consecutive days of the HLM form integral parts of the annexes of the present conclusions.

Operational Conclusions ILO-European Commission High-Level-Meeting, 10-11April 2014

General Conclusions	
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A sound partnership	For over a decade the ILO and the EC have built a many-sided and rich cooperation on employment and social affairs. Acknowledging the achievements of that partnership and the challenges posed by the global crisis, they agree to enhance their cooperation on several levels. The ILO and the EC will: 1. Strengthen their coordination to promote social justice, decent work and international labour standards in the global agenda, including in the context of the G20 and in joint activities with multilateral organisations and within the context of the Post 2015 Framework preparation 2. Reinforce contributions to each other's initiatives, run joint research and intensify exchanges on smart, inclusive and job-friendly recovery, youth employment, social dialogue, social investment and protection, green jobs and sustainable development; 3. Keep each other regularly informed about the implementation of international labour standards in the EU and in partner countries
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Strategic Orientations for ILO-EU Cooperation in the global agenda	
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Policy Coherence, Employment and Economic Governance	Restoring growth and creating more and better jobs are outstanding political objectives of both the EU and the ILO. The ILO and the EC will: 4. Explore further opportunities for closer cooperation in the context of the G20 to ensure greater policy coherence for inclusive and job-rich growth, including as regards the role of social dialogue 5. Actively engage in multilateral fora and share knowledge with the World Bank, OECD and the IMF; 6. Continue to share information on their research and analytical work and to carry out joint research work, especially on policy answers to the crisis.
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Youth employment	Youth unemployment is one of the key challenges facing the world today, and both the ILO and the EU have taken major initiatives to address it. Reinforced and intensive cooperation is to help efficiently tackle this major and urgent problem: The ILO and the EC will: 7. Continue to enlarge the scope of their cooperation on youth employment in particular with regard to actions in multilateral fora (Post 2015 Development Agenda, G20), stressing the important role of the social partners in the response to youth unemployment 8. Ensure strong complementarities of the respective activities, by enhancing the regular exchange of information and sharing results of policy analysis, ongoing technical assistance and best practices with a particular focus on cost-benefit analysis and good practice examples of Youth Guarantee Schemes (also from non-EU ILO members) and quality apprenticeships (in particular: tripartite governance, sectoral approaches); 9. Explore the need for and the possibilities of further technical cooperation, sharing knowledge and capacity building on youth employment and quality apprenticeship systems, especially in sectors with jobs growth potential at the request of Member States 10. Jointly advocate for the promotion of youth employment in development cooperation and explore possibilities for technical assistance addressing the needs of developing countries, in particular fragile countries.
Sustainable development and challenges in the post 2015 Framework	Defining sustainable development goals opens up opportunities to shape a universal and transformative global development agenda beyond 2015 that would guide economic, social/employment and environmental policies in countries at all stages of development. The promotion of decent work and of social protection is a shared objective of the EU and the ILO in the context of the post 2015 Development framework. The ILO and the EC will: 11. Work together in advocating a central role for employment, decent work, social protection and migration in the future development framework as a higher level objective; 12. Exchange views and analysis on possible targets and indicators to inform the intergovernmental negotiating process on the SDGs; 13. Continue to work together on decent work and social protection in development cooperation in particular in those countries in which those issues have been identified as priority areas. 14. Explore cooperation on green economy strategies 15. Exchange information on the preparation of Ouagadougou+10 16. Continue support to improving the capacities of countries in the field of labour statistics, and in particular for measuring progress towards decent work.

Strategies for a targeted ILO-EC cooperation	
International core labour standards and trade related matters	Over the years, the ILO and the EC have developed strong cooperation in the area of international labour standards. This cooperation has become extremely relevant in the sustainable development context of the EU trade agenda. The ILO and the EC will: 17. Explore ways to intensify their cooperation with respect to the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work, including the implementation of ILO fundamental Conventions, in the context of trade related matters such as concerning the binding provisions in this area contained in concluded EU Free Trade Agreements. 18. Enhance the exchange of information, including on site information, on the implementation of core labour standards by partner countries in a trade context, this may include providing expertise and technical assistance taking into account the conclusions of the ILO supervisory bodies 19. Share the results of the EC study on ILO standards and EU acquis
Informal Economy and Undeclared work	Facilitating transitions from the informal to the formal economy and reducing undeclared work are of a high priority for both the ILO and the EU in the years to come. This convergence of priorities calls for strengthening the cooperation of the two organizations. The ILO and the EC will: 20. Explore options for a follow up to their project on labour inspection strategies for combating undeclared work in Europe in the context of the future "EU platform in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work". 21. Jointly review the outcomes of projects undertaken in partnership that are targeting workers and enterprises in the informal economy 22. Explore possibilities to strengthen their cooperation on indicators on informal employment, The EC will: 23. Actively prepare EU contribution to the ILO standard setting regarding a Recommendation on the transitions from informal to formal economy
Preparation of forthcoming key events	24. The ILO and the EC will maintain close cooperation regarding relevant international events taking place in 2014, including: - The G20, and in particular in the preparation of Employment and Labour Ministers Meetings and Task Force on Employment, - The September UN General Assembly especially with regard to the Post 2015 Agenda - EU Conference on working conditions April 28 - European Business Forum on Vocational Training, 23-24 Sept. in Brussels - OSH World Conference in Germany

	- ILO-EC project on social dialogue – Turin – Closing event in Brussels in October - Preparations for the ILC 2014 agenda items on informal economy, forced labour, employment and labour standards - High Level Meeting of the Bangladesh Compact in Dhaka - Conference on occupational safety and health sponsored by the EU-Greek Presidency in Athens (16-17 June 2014)
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Issues addressed in technical meetings	
Joint Research	The joint EC-ILO research activities have been appreciated by both sides and wherever there is a value added joint cooperation should be continued. The ILO and the EC will: 25. Exchange regular information on programme and policy evaluations and on on-going ILO-EC research work including “Crisis responses, competitiveness and jobs” and “Inventory of policy responses to the crisis” and consider joint work on enterprise creation, employment and resilience, 26. Implement the agreed cooperation on “Strengthening the impact of sector and trade policies” 27. Further develop dialogue and research on labour provisions in trade and investment arrangements 28. Continue collaboration in strengthening partner countries capacities to monitor progress towards decent work, including through enhancement of labour market information systems 29. Continue the information exchange on relevant research carried out in both institutions, and where relevant invite each other to dissemination events 30. Where appropriate, organize a conference to discuss the findings of this research work and explore follow-up
Social dialogue and related international core labour standards	Social dialogue is a shared value of both the ILO and the EC and an essential tool in the achievement of inclusive growth which is particularly relevant in times of crisis recovery. Social dialogue is a key area for cooperation between both institutions with regard to both supporting capacity building initiatives with social partner organisations and supporting analytical work on the institutional conditions of social dialogue and on economic and social changes affecting industrial relations systems and the world of work: The ILO and the EC will: 31. Renew their strategic partnership on social dialogue for the period 2014 – 2017 and establish to this end a joint project combining capacity building and analytical work. This analytical work is a useful input to ILO and EC efforts to support the strengthening of social dialogue in EU countries particularly hit by the crisis. 32. Jointly disseminate the results of the on-going projects on social dialogue and on the database on transnational company agreements and contribute where appropriate in related publications 33. Inform each other about their social dialogue activities and meetings, in particular at sectoral level and explore possibilities of crossed participation in

	these meetings and of organising joint events. 34. Cooperate in the strengthening of social dialogue in candidate countries; including the contribution of the ILO to the EC-Turkey dialogue on trade union rights as well as the support to capacity building of the social partners. 35. Continue to cooperate on social dialogue in development cooperation, with the participation of relevant social partners
Social Protection	The ILO and the EC will: 36. Continue to promote social protection in the sustainable development agenda and promote internationally agreed standards on social protection and collaborate in international fora (e.g. SPIAC-B) 37. Explore possibilities of enhancing cooperation on technical assistance regarding social protection in development cooperation and facilitate communication between ILO field offices and EU Delegations to that aim 38. Explore cooperation on policies related to social protection issues within EU countries 39. Pursue their cooperation that has started in the context of the preparation of the next pension adequacy report 40. Exchange information on their respective activities in the area of long-term care 41. Invite each other to conferences on social protection related matters where appropriate
Occupational Safety and Health and working conditions in global supply chains	Improving OSH is a priority for both the ILO and the EU. Cooperation on OSH and working conditions in global supply chains is a major area for cooperation between the ILO and the EC. The ILO and the EC will: 42. Keep each other informed about their research and technical meetings on OSH and invite each other where appropriate 43. Explore possibilities to work together on OSH in the context of global supply chains and in emerging economies, including on the promotion of ratification of relevant ILO Conventions 44. Cooperate on safer workplaces in the context of the G20 45. Join efforts for the promotion of the establishment of up-to-date hazardous work lists under ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour, art.4 46. Invite each other to their key events on OSH in 2014 (World OSH conference, Conference on Working Conditions) 47. Explore possibilities to work together in the area of OSH data collection, on occupational diseases, workplace compliance and training activities The EC will: 48. Actively prepare EU contribution to the ILO decent work in global supply chain general discussion for the 105th session (2016) of the ILC
Specific countries	The ILO and EC can build on their long-standing cooperation with specific countries and the outcomes achieved, on the basis of the decisions of the ILO bodies and in consultation with the government and the social partners of these countries.

	The ILO and the EC will: 49. Bangladesh: work toward the full implementation of the Sustainability Compact for Bangladesh and continue to have regular exchanges on the developments in this country; 50. Guatemala: cooperate on the promotion of international labour standards related to freedom of association and social dialogue, 51. Qatar: keep each other informed of developments regarding the situation of migrant workers in the country. 52. Uzbekistan: Build upon recent progress towards eliminating child labour and step up their cooperation to address the elimination of forced labour and the promotion of decent work
Migration/ Trafficking in human beings and forced labour/ Domestic Workers	Both the ILO and the EC cooperated on issues related to migration, trafficking in human beings, forced labour and domestic workers The EC and the ILO will explore a more strategic approach to their cooperation in these areas and will 53. Continue their exchange of information on their respective activities and explore possibilities of cooperation where appropriate, for example as regards recruitment, cross border skills matching and in specific sectors. 54. Explore the possibility of stronger cooperation on trafficking in human beings, in line with the EU strategy against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Action Oriented Paper on THB. 55. Depending on the priority sectors identified at regional or country level, explore potential synergies of efforts in those countries/regions, in particular as regards regional integration processes and social dialogue. 56. Explore the possibility for expanding cooperation in the area of domestic work including its migration and trafficking dimensions and of organising a workshop on the implementation of the Domestic Workers Convention¹⁸⁹ in the EU 57. Explore follow-up actions to the 103rd session (2014) of the International Labour Conference as regards forced labour