



## Technical meeting on the future of work in the automotive industry

Geneva, 15–19 February 2021

### ► Conclusions<sup>1</sup>

The Technical Meeting on the Future of Work in the Automotive Industry,  
Having met virtually from 15 to 19 February 2021,  
Adopts the following conclusions:

#### Decent work challenges and opportunities in the automotive industry now and in the future

1. The automotive industry contributes significantly to world trade, economic growth, productive employment and decent work. It is key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. The positive impact of global automotive supply chains on job creation is important in view of demographic changes in terms of ageing, population growth and the increase of women's participation in the labour market. At the same time, the industry is faced with increasing pressure to reduce its negative externalities and to advance decent and sustainable work due to its environmental footprint and concerns about working conditions in its supply chains.
3. The industry is at a turning point: technological advances, climate change, demographic shifts, new consumer preferences and mobility concepts, and a transformative era of globalization are rapidly changing the organization of production and work in the industry.
4. The transition to a carbon neutral economy, new mobility patterns and changing consumer preferences are driving investments in new mobility solutions, electric and autonomous vehicles, cleaner production with alternative materials, and greater circularity.
5. The COVID-19 crisis place massive economic strains on the industry and its workers and added to existing challenges such as supply chain disruption, factory closures and a collapse in demand, accelerating the structural changes that employers and workers are facing in the short, medium and long term.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with established procedures, these conclusions will be submitted to the 343rd Session of the Governing Body of the ILO (November 2021) for its consideration.

6. New and sustainable enterprises will emerge while others are struggling and might not survive. New jobs will be created, while others might be lost or transformed.
7. Demand for workers with both technical and core work skills to drive innovation, productivity and sustainability in the industry is increasing. Investments in education, training, quality apprenticeship schemes, up- and reskilling and lifelong learning are urgently needed to retain skills, safeguard existing jobs, respond to the need of the industry and ensure that all workers, inter alia young women and men as well as older workers, can take advantage of future opportunities in the industry or elsewhere.
8. Social protection measures, enactment and enforcement of legislation, respect, promotion and realization of the fundamental principles and rights at work, including gender equality and non-discrimination, and social dialogue are key elements to ensuring that no-one is left behind.

## **Investing in people's capabilities and a just transition to decent and sustainable work**

9. The Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) and its human-centred approach provides a roadmap for shaping a future that works for all in the automotive industry.
10. To invest in people's capabilities, governments, employers and workers should renew their commitment to lifelong learning:
  - (a) governments by investing in education, training and lifelong learning at all levels and for all workers, inter alia older workers, migrant workers and workers with disabilities;
  - (b) enterprises by training their workers; and
  - (c) individuals by taking advantage of these opportunities.
11. To be effective, skills development and lifelong learning should be complemented by a set of coherent and supportive policies, as well as measures to expand social protection and to help workers navigate life and work transitions.
12. Social dialogue has diverse forms and levels depending on the contexts and traditions of each country, with collective bargaining at its heart. Consultations, exchanges of information and other forms of dialogue between social partners and with governments and other relevant actors are also important. These are essential tools for investing in people's capabilities and for adapting educational and vocational training systems and programmes to new job requirements and to workers' and employers' needs.
13. Gender gaps should be addressed by ensuring equal access to education and training for women and men and they should equally be supported to pursue an education and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Barriers to equal opportunity and treatment should be addressed through the implementation of a transformative industry-wide agenda that promote safety, full participation and equal outcomes for women workers.
14. Sustainable industrial policies, guided by the ILO Guidelines on a Just Transition to Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All (2015), are key to building back better and to invest in decent and sustainable work. They should be:

- (a) complemented by policies and incentives that promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the creation and development of sustainable enterprises, and the transition from the informal to the formal economy; and
  - (b) underpinned by respect for fundamental principles and rights at work and ratified ILO conventions and the effective enforcement of these in law and practice.
- 15.** Institutions of work should be strengthened to ensure adequate protection of all workers in the industry and its domestic and global supply chains. All enterprises, including multinational enterprises, should carry out due diligence in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- 16.** Particular attention should be paid to promoting safety and health at work for all workers, taking into account all risks, including psycho-social risks.
- 17.** As appropriate, special support needs to be provided to enterprises, and particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including clusters of SMEs, for the adoption and development of new digital technologies and the enhancement of workers' skills, safety and health at work and respect for workers' rights.
- 18.** Support should be provided to developing countries to fund and implement education, skills development and lifelong learning policies and to attain inclusive growth and decent work and other Sustainable Development Goals, contributing to a fair globalization.

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

- 19.** Social dialogue, based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, has a crucial role in designing policies to promote social justice. It is a means to achieve social and economic progress. Social dialogue and tripartism are essential for democracy and good governance.
- 20.** Governments, employers' and workers' organizations should:
- (a) support the industry navigate through its transformation, accelerated by the COVID-19 crisis, and mitigate the impact on enterprises and jobs;
  - (b) advance decent and sustainable work in the automotive industry;
  - (c) promote the acquisition of skills, competences and qualifications and access to quality education for all workers throughout their working lives to address skills mismatches now and in the future and encourage more women to study STEM;
  - (d) jointly engage in formulating and implementing coherent and comprehensive economic, trade, fiscal, education and sustainable industrial policies, incentives and actions, in accordance with national law and practice, to:
    - (i) create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, increased productivity and for sustainable enterprises of all sizes to grow and generate decent and productive work;
    - (ii) improve working conditions and safety and health at work and extend social protection to all workers in order to promote decent work; and
    - (iii) facilitate a just transition to a future of work that contributes to sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

21. Governments have the duty to adopt, implement and effectively enforce national laws to ensure that the fundamental principles and rights at work and ratified international labour Conventions apply to all, paying special attention to the need to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
22. Governments, employers' and workers' organizations and multinational enterprises are recommended to observe the principles of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
23. The Office should:
  - (a) maintain the highest levels of statistical, research and knowledge management capacities on decent work challenges and opportunities for women and men in the automotive industry, globally and in different regions and countries;
  - (b) prepare a blueprint for a skills development and lifelong learning strategy for the industry, with gender-based methodologies to anticipate skills needs and sharing of good practices to retain, adapt and improve skills;
  - (c) promote ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards relevant to the automotive industry and strengthen the capacity of constituents to realize the fundamental principles and rights at work for all;
  - (d) design and implement development cooperation programmes and projects in consultation with tripartite constituents to advance decent and sustainable work and investment in people's capabilities in the industry;
  - (e) support tripartite constituents to enable a just transition to a future of work that contributes to sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions through technical assistance, regional meetings, workshops and dialogue platforms with a particular focus on the global south;
  - (f) support its constituents to harness the fullest potential of technological progress and productivity growth, including through social dialogue, to achieve decent work and sustainable development, which ensure dignity, self-fulfilment and a just sharing of the benefits for all in the automotive industry;
  - (g) support constituents to formulate and implement a transformative industry-wide agenda to address the gender gap and promote safety, full participation and equal outcomes for women workers;
  - (h) reinforce its cooperation with other organizations to invest in people's capabilities and in decent and sustainable work in the automotive industry.

## Annex

### List of the instruments

#### Declaration:

- Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019)
- Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)
- Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998)
- Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (2017)

#### International Labour Conference (ILC):

- Conclusions concerning Decent Work in Global Supply Chains (2016)
- Conclusions concerning the Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises (2007)

#### International Labour Standards:

##### *Fundamental Conventions:*

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- **Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (and its 2014 Protocol )**
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

##### *Technical Conventions and Recommendations:*

- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)
- Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 (No. 206)
- Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)
- Termination of Employment Recommendation, 1982 (No. 166)
- Communications within the Undertaking Recommendation, 1967 (No. 129)
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
- Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198)
- Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)
- Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)

**Other ILO instruments:**

- Global Jobs Pact (2009)
- Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (2015)

**Instruments of other international organizations:**

- United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (2011)