



Technical meeting on the future of work in the oil and gas industry

Geneva, 28 November–2 December 2022

▶ Conclusions ¹

The Technical meeting on the future of work in the oil and gas industry,
Having met in Geneva from 28 November to 2 December 2022,
Adopts the following conclusions:

Decent work challenges and opportunities in the oil and gas industry now and in the future

1. The oil and gas industry contributes significantly to the global economy, its growth and development. Oil and gas power our economies and societies and are the base ingredients in thousands of manufactured products that businesses and consumers use every day.
2. The oil and gas industry accounts for a significant share of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and there are growing concerns about its footprint. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of different national circumstances establishes that all countries are responsible for addressing climate change, yet not equally so or at the same pace.
3. A growing number of countries are adopting laws and policies to reduce their dependency on fossil fuels and to meet their nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. Ambitious efforts and action, including to reduce GHG emissions, are needed to avoid permanent degradation of the environment and destruction of livelihoods and jobs.
4. The imperative to limit global warming will offer new opportunities for oil and gas countries and companies to contribute to the transition to cleaner energy sources. At the same time, this could lead to a decline in oil and gas production and demand for oil and gas workers in some regions, countries and communities.
5. The industry is at the forefront of technological advances and continues to invest in digital and automated products and processes, including ways to reduce GHG emissions. Demand for

¹ In accordance with established procedures, these conclusions will be submitted to the 347th Session of the Governing Body of the ILO (March 2023) for its consideration.

high-skilled workers to drive innovation, productivity and sustainability is increasing. This compounds the challenge of attracting and retaining talent.

6. The oil and gas industry is capital-intensive and highly cyclical. Fluctuations in production, prices and the introduction of technology may have an impact on employment and are challenging for many countries to manage, particularly those without inclusive, robust and sustainable social protection systems in place. Social dialogue is key to addressing sectoral, temporal, geographical and potential structural misalignments between job losses and job creation and to leveraging the benefits of the energy transition to foster sustainable enterprises and decent jobs.
7. Based on available data, wages, other working conditions, and social benefits in the oil and gas industry are generally better than those in other industries. However, there is a need to continually improve working conditions, including gender equality, occupational safety and health and other fundamental principles and rights at work. Stable political, legal and institutional frameworks as well as strong and independent workers' and employers' organizations are key to protecting all workers in the oil and gas industry in law and practice and to advance a just energy transition.
8. As the world enters a new era of globalization, characterized by the return of geopolitics, trade turbulence and the impacts of the changing climate, the oil and gas industry will continue to be greatly affected. While these commodities will remain of key importance for our economies and societies and for how we live, produce and consume, it is becoming harder for the industry and for oil and gas workers to navigate an increasingly uncertain future.

Shaping a future that works for all

9. The ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (Guidelines for a just transition) contain important principles and guidance that provide a road map for shaping a future of work that contributes to sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. These guidelines are key to ensuring a just energy transition that leaves no one behind.
10. Since regional realities are varied and the pace of exploration and development differs from country to country, the specific circumstances and challenges and opportunities for oil and gas-producing countries to advance decent work should be taken into account.
 - (a) For established oil and gas-producing countries that are reducing their dependency on oil and gas, it is imperative to implement a mix of coherent incentives, supportive and enabling frameworks for enterprises and workers to ensure a just transition.
 - (b) For newcomers, there is a need to invest in stable legal frameworks and policies to maximize decent employment opportunities, create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, address informality, develop new skills and improve working conditions and safety and health at work.
 - (c) For all countries, there is a need to diversify the energy mix by accelerating investment in a sustainable, gradual and just energy transition, facilitated by the sharing of knowledge and innovation, access to finance and technology, and provision of skills development and universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems for all that facilitate a just transition to more environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

11. Stable macroeconomic policies that promote full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work are critical to harnessing the potential of the oil and gas industry in support of national development but also to ensuring a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. They should be accompanied by the development and implementation of sustainable industrial policies for the oil and gas sector as well as for the broader energy sector.
12. Social dialogue is particularly critical in ensuring that employers and workers in the oil and gas sector are involved in the formulation of employment, education and training and technology policies and action to facilitate:
 - (a) structural change at the global, sectoral and national level;
 - (b) facilitate access to environmentally friendly technology;
 - (c) green innovation and jobs;
 - (d) the re-employment of workers who have lost their jobs as a result of these changes; and
 - (e) a just energy transition.
13. To address continuing skills gaps, governments, employers and workers should renew their commitment to lifelong learning, including through financing of technical and vocational education and training, enterprise re- and up-skilling programmes, public-private partnerships and partnerships with universities. To be effective, skills development and lifelong learning should be complemented by a set of coherent and supportive active labour market policies.
14. Particular attention should be paid to protect the right of indigenous and tribal peoples, promote gender equality and diversity, address violence and harassment in the workplace, and to respect, promote and realize a safe and healthy working environment and other fundamental principles and rights at work in the oil and gas industry.
15. Both state-owned and private oil and gas enterprises can make significant contributions to economic and social progress. Enterprises and governments should work together for solutions that reduce emissions in oil and gas production.
16. Special support should be provided to small and medium-sized enterprises to enhance employment, productivity, workers' skills, safety and health at work and respect for workers' rights, including through local content policies and the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises.
17. Sound employment relations and social dialogue, based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, are key to good governance in the workplace, decent work, inclusive economic growth and democracy. Social dialogue has diverse forms and levels depending on the context 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 are also important. Free, independent, strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations, together with trust, commitment and respect by the governments for the autonomy of the social partners, are vital for effective social dialogue in the oil and gas industry.

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

18. Governments and social partners have complementary but different responsibilities in promoting decent work in the oil and gas industry:
 - (a) Oil and gas enterprises have a responsibility to respect human and labour rights in their supply chains, consistent with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. They should also comply with national laws wherever they operate.
 - (b) Governments have the duty to adopt, implement and effectively enforce national laws and regulations and to ensure that fundamental principles and rights at work and ratified international labour Conventions protect and are applied to all workers in the oil and gas industry, taking into account their obligations under other international labour standards.
19. Governments should strengthen labour administration and labour inspection systems in order to ensure full compliance with laws and regulations and access to appropriate and effective remedy and complaints mechanisms especially in remote or isolated oil and gas operations and in low-income countries.
20. Governments should provide universal access to comprehensive, adequate, and sustainable social protection systems that can respond to life-cycle risks, emerging needs and global risks; protect all people and also enterprises in the eventuality of future crises and transformations; and facilitate a just transition to more environmentally sustainable economies and societies.
21. Governments together with social partners should:
 - (a) engage in effective social dialogue to promote decent work and a just transition for all;
 - (b) promote equality of opportunity and treatment for women, including by ending gender-biased practices, where they exist, limiting women's access to and career progression in the oil and gas and renewable energy industries, and prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work;
 - (c) actively foster equal and inclusive employment policies in the industry, equal treatment in recruitment, promotion and training, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination;
 - (d) develop and/or strengthen policies and strategies on skills development and lifelong learning through technical and vocational education and training and up- and re-skilling;
 - (e) ensure decent working conditions and a safe and healthy working environment and access to universal, comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection for all oil and gas workers, regardless of the nature of their employment relationship or working arrangements; and
 - (f) facilitate technology transfer, the sharing of good practices and promote just transition financing and other means to support sustainable development projects. This should be done through innovative partnerships and enhanced collaboration at the national and regional level as well as international cooperation, including triangular and South-South cooperation, both among countries that are developing their industry and among those that are transitioning to renewable energy sources.

22. In line with the ILO Guidelines for a just transition, the Office should:

- (a) promote the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, ILO declarations, instruments and tools relevant to the oil and gas industry, and strengthen the capacity of constituents to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work (see appendix);
- (b) build the capacity of constituents to develop and implement macroeconomic and industrial strategies and engage in effective social dialogue for the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work in the oil and gas industry, including through policy advice, development cooperation projects and regional meetings;
- (c) encourage and promote the full development and utilization of social dialogue in all its forms and at all levels to seize opportunities and overcome barriers to a just transition;
- (d) collect gender-disaggregated data, conduct studies and disseminate statistics and research to provide evidence-based guidance on decent work and a just transition;
- (e) promote gender-responsive employment policies to tackle gender inequalities and boost women's participation in the labour market;
- (f) provide policy advice and technical assistance to promote decent work and a just energy transition and to seize opportunities and address challenges in the renewable energy industry;
- (g) promote innovative partnerships and enhanced collaboration at the national and regional level as well as international cooperation, including triangular and South-South cooperation; and
- (h) promote international cooperation and policy coherence to advance decent work and a just transition in the oil and gas industry, including by involving constituents in leading and cooperating with relevant multilateral and other organizations.

Appendix

Non-exhaustive reference list of ILO declarations, instruments and guidance and other international instruments and guidance to advance decent work in the oil and gas industry

International Labour Standards

Fundamental Instruments

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), its 2014 Protocol, 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 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 (priority) Conventions

- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), and the Labour Inspection Recommendation, 1947 (No. 81)
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), and the Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122)
- 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

- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)
- Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
- Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148)
- Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150)
- Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)
- Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)
- Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
- Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)
- Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174)
- Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181)
- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)

Technical Recommendations

- Collective Bargaining Recommendation, 1981 (No. 163)
- Termination of Employment Recommendation, 1982 (No. 166)
- Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
- Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- 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)
- Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)
- Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 (No. 206)

Declarations

- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, adopted at the 86th Session of the International Labour Conference (1998) and amended at the 110th Session (2022)
- ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)

- Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (2017)
- ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019)

Other ILO guidance

- Resolution concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (2007)
- Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (2015)
- Resolution concerning decent work in global supply chains (2016)

International instruments and guidance

- UNFCCC Paris Agreement (2015)
- United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (2011)