



**International
Labour
Organization**

Promoting jobs,
protecting people

[About the ILO](#)
[Topics](#)
[Regions](#)
[Meetings and
events](#)
[Programmes
and projects](#)
[Publications](#)
[Labour
standards](#)
[Statistics and
databases](#)

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[Instruments](#)
[Key documents](#)
[Ratification of ILO
Conventions](#)
[Supervising the
application of
International Labour
Standards](#)
[Regular reporting](#)
[Country profiles](#)
[Comparatives](#)
[Maritime Labour
Convention \(2006\)](#)

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Labour and Social
Rights

▶ LEGOSH

Global database on
occupational safety and
health legislation

▶ EPLex

Employment protection
legislation database

▶ Compendium of court decisions

[NORMLEX Home](#) > [Key documents](#) > [ILO Constitution](#)

ILO Constitution

Display in: [French](#) - [Spanish](#)

Table of contents

Preamble

Chapter I - Organization

- ▶ [Article 1 - Establishment, MemberShip, Withdrawal, Readmission](#)
- ▶ [Article 2 - Organs](#)
- ▶ [Article 3 - Conference Meetings and delegates, Advisers, Advisers from non-metropolitan territories, Nomination of non-governmental representatives, Status of advisers, Credentials](#)
- ▶ [Article 4 - Voting rights](#)
- ▶ [Article 5 - Place of meetings of the Conference](#)
- ▶ [Article 6 - Seat of the International Labour Office](#)
- ▶ [Article 7 - Governing Body Composition, Government representatives, States of chief industrial importance, Employers' and Workers' representatives, Term of office, Vacancies, substitutes, etc., Officers, Procedure](#)
- ▶ [Article 8 - Director-General](#)
- ▶ [Article 9 - Staff Appointment, International character of responsibilities](#)
- ▶ [Article 10 - Functions of the Office](#)
- ▶ [Article 11 - Relations with governments](#)
- ▶ [Article 12 - Relations with international organizations](#)
- ▶ [Article 13 - Financial and budgetary arrangements , Arrears in payment of contributions, Financial responsibility of Director-General](#)

Chapter II - Procedure

- ▶ [Article 14 - Agenda for Conference, Preparation for Conference](#)
- ▶ [Article 15 - Transmission of agenda and reports for Conference , Government representatives](#)
- ▶ [Article 16 - Objections to agenda , Inclusion of new items by Conference](#)
- ▶ [Article 17 -](#)

Article 37
Interpretation of Constitution and Conventions

1. Any question or dispute relating to the interpretation of this Constitution or of any subsequent Convention concluded by the Members in pursuance of the provisions of this Constitution shall be referred for decision to the International Court of Justice.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article the Governing Body may make and submit to the Conference for approval rules providing for the appointment of a tribunal for the expeditious determination of any dispute or question relating to the interpretation of a Convention which may be referred thereto by the Governing Body or in accordance with the terms of the Convention. Any applicable judgement or advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice shall be binding upon any tribunal established in virtue of this paragraph. Any award made by such a tribunal shall be circulated to the Members of the Organization and any observations which they may make thereon shall be brought before the Conference.

Article 38
Regional Conferences

1. The International Labour Organization may convene such regional conferences and establish such regional agencies as may be desirable to promote the aims and purposes of the Organization.
2. The powers, functions and procedure of regional conferences shall be governed by rules drawn up by the Governing Body and submitted to the General Conference for confirmation.

Chapter IV - Miscellaneous provisions

Article 39
Legal status of Organization

1. The International Labour Organization shall possess full juridical personality and in particular the capacity:
 - (a) to contract;
 - (b) to acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property;
 - (c) to institute legal proceedings.

Article 40
Privileges and immunities

1. The International Labour Organization shall enjoy in the territory of each of its Members such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes.
2. Delegates to the Conference, members of the Governing Body and the Director-General and officials of the Office shall likewise enjoy such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Organization.
3. Such privileges and immunities shall be defined in a separate agreement to be prepared by the Organization with a view to its acceptance by the States Members.

Annex

Declaration concerning the aims and purposes of the International Labour Organisation (DECLARATION OF PHILADELPHIA)

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting in its Twenty-sixth Session in Philadelphia, hereby adopts, this tenth day of May in the year nineteen hundred and forty-four, the present Declaration of the aims and purposes of the International Labour Organization and of the principles which should inspire the policy of its Members.

I

The Conference reaffirms the fundamental principles on which the Organization is based and, in particular, that:

- (a) labour is not a commodity;
- (b) freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress;
- (c) poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere;
- (d) the war against want requires to be carried on with unrelenting vigour within each nation, and by continuous and concerted international effort in which the representatives of workers and employers, enjoying equal status with those of governments, join with them in free discussion and democratic decision with a view to the promotion of the common welfare.

II

Believing that experience has fully demonstrated the truth of the statement in the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation that lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice, the Conference affirms that:

- (a) all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity;
- (b) the attainment of the conditions in which this shall be possible must constitute the central aim of national and international policy;
- (c) all national and international policies and measures, in particular those of an economic and financial character, should be judged in this light and accepted only in so far as they may be held to promote and not to hinder the achievement of this fundamental objective;
- (d) it is a responsibility of the International Labour Organization to examine and consider all international economic and financial policies and measures in the light of this fundamental objective;
- (e) in discharging the tasks entrusted to it the International Labour Organization, having considered all relevant economic and financial factors, may include in its decisions and recommendations any provisions which it considers appropriate.

III

The Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organization to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve:

- (a) full employment and the raising of standards of living;
- (b) the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction

of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common well-being;

(c) the provision, as a means to the attainment of this end and under adequate guarantees for all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of labour, including migration for employment and settlement;

(d) policies in regard to wages and earnings, hours and other conditions of work calculated to ensure a just share of the fruits of progress to all, and a minimum living wage to all employed and in need of such protection;

(e) the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining, the cooperation of management and labour in the continuous improvement of productive efficiency, and the collaboration of workers and employers in the preparation and application of social and economic measures;

(f) the extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care;

(g) adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations;

(h) provision for child welfare and maternity protection;

(i) the provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture;

(j) the assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity.

IV

Confident that the fuller and broader utilization of the world's productive resources necessary for the achievement of the objectives set forth in this Declaration can be secured by effective international and national action, including measures to expand production and consumption, to avoid severe economic fluctuations to promote the economic and social advancement of the less developed regions of the world, to assure greater stability in world prices of primary products, and to promote a high and steady volume of international trade, the Conference pledges the full cooperation of the International Labour Organization with such international bodies as may be entrusted with a share of the responsibility for this great task and for the promotion of the health, education and well-being of all peoples.

V

The conference affirms that the principles set forth in this Declaration are fully applicable to all peoples everywhere and that, while the manner of their application must be determined with due regard to the stage of social and economic development reached by each people, their progressive application to peoples who are still dependent, as well as to those who have already achieved self-government, is a matter of concern to the whole civilized world.

Amendments to the Constitution

The original text of the Constitution, established in 1919, has been modified by the amendment of 1922 which entered into force on 4 June 1934; the Instrument of Amendment of 1945 which entered into force on 26 September 1946; the Instrument of Amendment of 1946 which entered into force on 20 April 1948; the Instrument of Amendment of 1953 which entered into force on 20 May 1954; the Instrument of Amendment of 1962 which entered into force on 22 May 1963; and the Instrument of Amendment of 1972 which entered into force on 1 November 1974.