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Human resources development and training

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INTRODUCTION

On 18 June 2003 the International Labour Conference, meeting in Geneva at its 91st Session, adopted the following resolution:

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having adopted the report of the Committee appointed to consider the fourth item on the agenda,

Having in particular approved as general conclusions, with a view to the consultation of governments, proposals for a Recommendation concerning human resources development and training;

Decides that an item entitled “Human resources development and training” shall be included in the agenda of its next ordinary session for a second discussion with a view to the adoption of a Recommendation.

By virtue of this resolution and in accordance with article 39, paragraph 6, of the Standing Orders of the Conference, the Office is required to prepare, on the basis of the first discussion by the Conference, the text of a proposed Recommendation and to communicate it to governments so as to reach them not later than two months from the closing of the 91st Session of the Conference, asking them to state, within three months, after consulting the most representative organizations of employers and workers, whether they have any amendments to suggest or comments to make.

The purpose of this report is to transmit to governments the text of the proposed Recommendation based on the Proposed Conclusions adopted by the Conference at its 91st Session.

In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Conference, any amendments or comments with regard to the proposed text should be submitted as soon as possible, and in any case, so as to reach the Office in Geneva not later than 30 November 2003. Governments, which have no amendments or comments to put forward, are asked to inform the Office by the same date whether they consider that the proposed text is a satisfactory basis for discussion by the Conference at its 92nd Session.

In accordance with article 39, paragraph 6, of the Standing Orders of the Conference, governments are requested to consult the most representative organizations of employers and workers before they finalize their replies, and to indicate which organizations they have consulted. Article 5(1)(a) of the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), also requires this consultation for those countries that have ratified Convention No. 144. The results of the consultation should be reflected in the governments’ replies.

PROPOSED TEXT

The text of a proposed Recommendation concerning human resources development and training is given below. This text is based on the Proposed Conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 91st Session (hereinafter referred to as “the Conclusions”).

The report of the Committee on Human Resources, appointed by the Conference to consider this item (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”), together with the record of the discussion in plenary session, are contained in the *Provisional Record* of the Conference (*Provisional Record* Nos. 19 and 26).¹

A number of drafting changes have been incorporated into the proposed text in the process of adapting the Proposed Conclusions to the style usually used for drafting Recommendations. Some further editorial changes have been made in the proposed instrument in the interest of greater clarity to bring the two official language versions of the texts into line with one another or to harmonize certain provisions.

In the commentary below, the Office will seek to obtain clarification on possible problems which were raised during the discussions in the Committee and in the plenary session or are suggested by a more careful reading of the Proposed Conclusions. The Office has not proposed new formulations or a major reorganization of the text in view of the discussions which lead to its adoption. The Office requests that Members reflect on these points and submit their comments for inclusion in Report IV(2), which the Office is required to prepare in accordance with article 39, paragraph 7, of the Standing Orders of the Conference.

¹ These texts are reproduced in the *Record of Proceedings* of the 91st Session of the International Labour Conference. They can also be consulted on the web site of the International Labour Office: www.ilo.org. Copies will be sent on application to the Distribution Unit, ILO, CH-1211, Geneva, 22.

Proposed Recommendation

GENERAL COMMENT

Reflecting upon certain remarks presented at the end of the discussion on the Proposed Conclusions, the Office notes that there may in fact be a degree of repetition in the text as adopted. Including the same issue under different titles and expressing the same issue in slightly different terms, may lead to the conclusion that there is a difference of substance. For example, various aspects of pre-employment training have been treated in several paragraphs in the text and it may be useful to clarify whether they are complementary or duplicative. Additionally, the question may be asked why the formula “in cooperation with the social partners” has been maintained in some cases while the formula “with the involvement of the social partners” or “in consultation with the social partners” has been used in others. Comments from the Members regarding possible consolidation of the text may help to avoid any ambiguities that might otherwise arise.

PREAMBLE

(Point 8 of the Proposed Conclusions)

The Office suggests that the term “in terms of both its quantity and quality” is implicit in “decent work”, therefore, it has been deleted from the paragraph.

(Point 9(a) of the Proposed Conclusions)

Typically when Conventions are included in the text, the accompanying Recommendations are also included. Therefore, the Office invites Members to comment on whether the subparagraph should be redrafted to read: “the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975; the Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation, 1964 and the Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984; and the Paid Educational Leave Convention and Recommendation, 1974”.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

Paragraph 1

(Point 10 of the Proposed Conclusions)

The Office has retained the term “consistent with, and complementary to,” but invites Members to comment on whether the paragraph would be clearer if “and complementary to” was deleted.

Paragraph 3

(Point 13(a) of the Proposed Conclusions)

Subparagraph (d)

The Office suggests a change to the text to read: “... progress within and between enterprises ...” rather than “... progress within the enterprise and between jobs ...” Members are invited to state if the revised text is acceptable.

*Paragraph 5**(Point 14(c) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Subparagraph (c)

“A guiding framework” has been used in this clause, but the meaning is not immediately clear. Members are asked to comment on the use of this term.

*Paragraph 5**(Point 14(h) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Several amendments, to add a series of additional subparagraphs to this paragraph, were adopted at the 91st Session (2003) of the International Labour Conference. As a result, this subparagraph became obsolete and has been deleted.

*Paragraph 5**(Point 14(i) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Subparagraph (h)

The Office proposes rewording the final sentence to read: “The framework should be responsive to changing technologies and trends in the labour market, recognizing regional and local differences and be consistent nationally.” Comments are invited on whether the revised text is acceptable.

*Paragraph 5**(Point 14(m) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Subparagraph (l)

As it is unclear what constitute “the institutions of social dialogue”, the Office asks Members to comment on whether: “provide support to the social partners to enable them to participate in social dialogue on training” is acceptable.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

*Paragraph 6**(Point 15 of the Proposed Conclusions)*

This paragraph has been reworded to add clarity. It now reads: “Members should establish and maintain a coordinated education and training system, along with a commitment to make further improvements to it, within the concept of lifelong learning, taking into account the primary responsibility of government for education and pre-employment training and for training the unemployed as well as recognizing the role of the social partners in further training. Education and pre-employment training

includes compulsory basic education, incorporating basic knowledge, literacy and numeracy skills and appropriate use of information and communication technology.”

Paragraph 8

(Point 17 of the Proposed Conclusions)

The paragraph has been reworded to read: “Investment in education and training should consider benchmarks in relation to comparable countries, regions and sectors.” Implicit in the term “benchmarks” is that they are a point of orientation.

DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

Paragraph 10

(Point 19(k) of the Proposed Conclusions)

Subparagraph (j)

As this subparagraph addresses the role of government to promote training for their *own employees*, does the text, which reads: “... as well as provide equitable training opportunities to *all workers*” refer to these employees only or to all workers in both the public and private sector? Members are invited to comment in order to clarify this issue.

Paragraph 11

(Point 19(d) of the Proposed Conclusions)

The Office considers that it would not be fully appropriate to simply replace the beginning of the sentence “the instrument should *encourage* Members to” (emphases added) with “Members should” in the case of tripartite dialogue, since the Member cannot consider the possibility of undertaking such dialogue alone, but other social partners could also consider initiating such a dialogue. Therefore, the subparagraph has been converted into a separate paragraph.

FRAMEWORK FOR RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF SKILLS

Paragraphs 12 and 13

(Point 20(a) and (b) of the Proposed Conclusions)

These paragraphs have been redrafted for clarity as well as to distinguish the issue of recognition and certification of competencies and qualifications of migrant workers from the general issue of assessment, certification and recognition of skills and credentials.

TRAINING FOR DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

*Paragraph 15**(Point 22 of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Comments are invited on whether the phrase “promote the countering of the social exclusion of people with special needs ...” would read better as “promote the social inclusion of people with special needs ...”, which is consistent with the title of this section.

TRAINING PROVIDERS

*Paragraph 17**(Point 24(c) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Subparagraph (c)

Comments are invited to clarify the meaning of this clause with regard to the phrase “evaluating the outcomes of education and training” should this read “and evaluate the outcomes of education and training”?

INTERNATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

*Paragraph 22**(Point 29(f) of the Proposed Conclusions)*

Subparagraph (f)

Recalling the advice of the Legal Adviser and the ensuing discussion regarding the use of “less advanced countries” rather than “less advantaged countries”, some Members suggested using other wording such as “developing countries” or “least developed countries”. It was signalled that this matter should be revisited in the 2004 discussion, therefore Members are invited to comment.

Proposed Recommendation concerning human resources development and training

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its 92nd Session on June 2004, and

Recognizing that education, training and lifelong learning contribute significantly to promoting the interests of people, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole, especially considering the critical challenge of attaining full employment, social inclusivity and sustained economic growth in the global economy, and

Calling on governments, employers and workers to renew their commitment to lifelong learning: governments by investing to enhance education and training at all levels; the private sector by training employees; and individuals by making use of the education, training and lifelong-learning opportunities, and

Recognizing that education, training and lifelong learning are fundamental, but by themselves insufficient, to ensure sustainable economic and social development and that they should therefore be consistent with, and form an integral part of, comprehensive economic, social and labour market policies and programmes, and

Recognizing also the need for consistency between human resources development policy and other policies important for economic growth and employment creation, such as economic, fiscal and social policies, and

Recognizing that many developing countries need support in the design, funding and implementation of modern education and training policies to attain development and economic growth, and

Recalling that the realization of decent work for workers everywhere is a primary objective of the International Labour Organization, and

Noting the rights and principles embodied in the relevant ILO instruments, and in particular:

- (a) the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975; the Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation, 1964; and the Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974;
- (b) the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up;
- (c) the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy;
- (d) the Conclusions concerning human resources training and development, adopted at the 88th Session (2000) of the International Labour Conference, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to human resources development and training, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation; adopts this day of June of the year two thousand and four the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Human Resources Development and Training Recommendation, 2004.

I. OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

1. Members should formulate, apply and review national human resources development and education and training policies which are consistent with, and complementary to, other economic and social policies, based on social dialogue, and which reflect the different roles of government and the social partners.

2. The realization of lifelong learning should be based on the explicit commitment: by governments to invest in enhancing education and training at all levels; by the private sector in training employees; and by individuals in developing their own abilities and careers.

3. For the purpose of this Recommendation:

- (a) the term “lifelong learning” encompasses all learning activities undertaken throughout life for the development of competencies and qualifications;
- (b) the term “competencies” covers the knowledge, skills and know-how applied and mastered in a specific context;
- (c) the term “qualifications” means a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of a worker which is recognized at international, national or sectoral level; and
- (d) the term “employability” relates to portable competencies and qualifications that enhance an individual’s capacity to make use of the education and training opportunities available in order to secure and retain decent work, progress within the enterprise and between jobs and cope with changes in technology and labour market conditions.

4. Members should identify human resources development and training policies which:

- (a) facilitate lifelong learning and employability and are part of a range of policy measures designed to achieve quality and safe jobs as well as sustainable economic and social development;
- (b) give equal consideration to economic and social objectives, emphasize sustainable economic development in the context of the globalizing economy and the knowledge- and skills-based society, as well as develop competencies, and promote decent work, job retention, social development, social inclusion and poverty reduction;

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- (c) stress the importance of innovation, competitiveness, productivity and growth of the economy, as well as the creation of decent jobs and the employability of people, considering that innovation creates new employment opportunities and also requires new approaches to education and training to meet the demand for new skills;
 - (d) address the challenge of transforming activities in the informal economy into decent work fully integrated into mainstream economic life; policies and programmes should be developed with the aim of creating decent jobs and opportunities for education and training, as well as validating prior learning and skills gained to assist workers and employers move into the formal economy;
 - (e) promote and sustain public and private investment in the infrastructure needed for the use of information and communication technology in education and training, in hardware and software for training purposes, as well as in the training of teachers and trainers, using local, national and international collaborative networks; and
 - (f) reduce inequalities in the participation of adults in education and training.

5. Members should:

- (a) recognize that education and training are a right for all and, in cooperation with the social partners, work towards ensuring access for all to lifelong learning;
- (b) define, with the involvement of the social partners, a national strategy for education;
- (c) define, with the involvement of the social partners, a national strategy, as well as establish a guiding framework, for training policies at different levels – national, regional, local, sectoral, enterprise – which promote social dialogue;
- (d) align human resources development and training policies with policies and strategies aimed at creating economic growth and employment opportunities such as economic, fiscal and social policies;
- (e) create a general economic environment and incentives to encourage: enterprises to invest in education and training; individuals to develop their own abilities and careers, and enable and motivate them to participate in education and training programmes;
- (f) facilitate the development of a training delivery system consistent with national conditions and practices;
- (g) assume the primary responsibility for investing in education and pre-employment training recognizing that qualified teachers and trainers, working under decent conditions, are of fundamental importance in providing quality education to assist children and adults reach high standards in academic and vocational competencies;
- (h) establish a national qualifications framework to facilitate lifelong learning, assist enterprises and employment agencies to match skill demand with supply, guide individuals in their choice of training and career and facilitate the recognition of prior learning and previously acquired skills, competencies and experience. This

framework should be responsive to changing technologies and trends in the labour market and recognize regional and local differences, without losing transparency at the national level;

- (i) strengthen social dialogue on training at the different levels – international, national, regional, local, sectoral, enterprise;
- (j) promote equal opportunities for women and men in education and training;
- (k) promote access to education and training for people with special needs, notably youth, people with disabilities, migrants, older workers and the socially excluded; and for workers in small and medium-sized enterprises, in the informal economy, in the rural sector and in self-employment. The identification of such groups should be made at the national level;
- (l) provide support to the social partners to enable them to participate in social dialogue on training; and
- (m) provide for supportive social and other policies to enable all persons to participate in training and development.

II. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

6. Members should establish and maintain a coordinated education and training system, along with a commitment to make further improvements to it, within the concept of lifelong learning, taking into account the primary responsibility of government for education and pre-employment training and for training the unemployed, as well as recognizing the role of the social partners in further training. Education and pre-employment training includes compulsory basic education incorporating basic knowledge, literacy and numeracy skills and appropriate use of information and communication technology.

7. Members should encourage the enhancement of social dialogue on training as a basic principle for systems development, programme relevance, quality and cost-effectiveness.

8. Investment in education and training should consider benchmarks in relation to comparable countries, regions and sectors.

III. EDUCATION AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

9. Members should:

- (a) recognize their responsibility for education and pre-employment training and improve access for all to enhance employability and to prevent social exclusion;
- (b) develop approaches to non-formal education and training, especially for adults who were denied education and training opportunities when young;
- (c) make use of new information and communication technology in learning and training, to the extent possible;

- (d) ensure provision of vocational, labour market and career information and guidance and employment counselling, supplemented by information on the rights and obligations of all concerned under labour-related laws and other forms of labour regulation;
- (e) ensure that education and pre-employment training programmes are relevant and that their quality is maintained; and
- (f) ensure that vocational education and training systems are developed and strengthened to provide appropriate opportunities for the development and certification of skills relevant to the labour market.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

10. Members should:

- (a) promote, with the involvement of the social partners, the ongoing identification of trends in the skills needed by individuals, enterprises, the economy and society as a whole;
- (b) recognize workplace learning, including formal and informal learning, and work experience;
- (c) support initiatives by the social partners in the field of training in bipartite dialogue, including collective bargaining;
- (d) recognize the role of the social partners, enterprises and workers in contributing to training; provide positive measures to stimulate investment and participation in training; and assume primary responsibility for the training of the unemployed;
- (e) promote the expansion of workplace-based learning and training by:
 - (i) utilizing high-performance work practices;
 - (ii) organizing on- and off-the-job training with public and private training providers, and making greater use of information and communication technology; and
 - (iii) encouraging the use of new forms of learning along with appropriate social policies and measures to facilitate participation in training;
- (f) urge private and public employers to adopt best practices in human resources development;
- (g) develop equal opportunity strategies, measures and programmes to promote and implement training for women, as well as specific groups and economic sectors, and people with special needs, with the objective of reducing inequalities;
- (h) promote equal opportunities for, and access to, career guidance and skill upgrading for all workers, as well as support for retraining employees whose jobs are at risk;

- (i) call upon multinational enterprises to provide training for all levels of their employees in home and host countries, to meet the needs of the enterprises and contribute to the development of the country; and
- (j) promote the development of training policies for their own employees, recognizing the role of the social partners in the public sector, as well as provide equitable training opportunities to all workers.

11. Members should consider the possibility of undertaking tripartite dialogue on training at various levels of government.

V. FRAMEWORK FOR RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION OF SKILLS

12. Measures should be adopted, in consultation with the social partners, to promote the development, implementation and financing of a transparent mechanism for the assessment, certification and recognition of skills and credentials, including the accreditation and validation of prior learning and previous experience, irrespective of the countries where they were acquired and of whether acquired formally or informally, and using a national qualifications framework. Such an assessment methodology should be fair, linked to standards and non-discriminatory, and the national framework should include a credible system of certification which will ensure that skills are portable and recognized across enterprises, sectors, industries and educational institutions.

13. Special provisions should be designed for migrant workers in order to ensure recognition and certification of competencies and qualifications.

VI. TRAINING FOR DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

14. Members should recognize:

- (a) the primary role of government for the training of the unemployed, those seeking to enter or re-enter the labour market and people with special needs, to develop and enhance their employability in securing decent work in the private and public sectors through such measures as incentives and assistance;
- (b) the role of the social partners to support, through human resources development policies and other measures, the integration of the unemployed and people with special needs in jobs; and
- (c) the role of the local authorities and communities in implementing programmes for people with special needs.

15. Measures should be adopted to promote the countering of the social exclusion of people with special needs by paying attention to their access to lifelong-learning possibilities and programmes which assist them to secure decent work.

VII. TRAINING PROVIDERS

16. Members should, in cooperation with the social partners, promote diversity of training provision to meet the different needs of individuals and enterprises and to

ensure high-quality standards, recognition and transferability of competencies and qualifications within a national quality assurance framework.

17. Members should:

- (a) develop a framework for the certification of qualifications of training providers;
- (b) identify the roles of government and the social partners in promoting the expansion and diversification of training;
- (c) include quality assurance in the public system and promote its development within the private training market and evaluate the outcomes of education and training; and
- (d) develop quality standards for trainers and create the opportunities for trainers to meet such standards.

VIII. RESEARCH AND TRAINING SUPPORT SERVICES IN HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, LIFELONG LEARNING AND TRAINING

18. Members should promote and facilitate the development of their own capacity, as well as assisting in developing that of the social partners, to analyse trends in labour markets and human resources development and training.

19. Members should:

- (a) collect information, disaggregated by gender and age, on educational levels, qualifications, training activities, and employment and incomes, especially when organizing regular surveys of the population, so that trends can be established and comparative analysis undertaken to inform policy;
- (b) establish databases and quantitative and qualitative indicators, including by gender and age, on the national training system and gather data on training in the private sector, taking into account the impact of data collection on enterprises; and
- (c) collect information on skills, competencies and emerging trends in the labour market from a variety of sources, including longitudinal studies and not confined to traditional occupational classifications.

20. Members should:

- (a) assure and facilitate, throughout life, participation in, and access to, vocational and career information and guidance, job placement services and job search techniques, as well as access to education, training and active labour market programmes and skills recognition;
- (b) promote and facilitate the use of information and communication technology, as well as traditional best practices in information and guidance services; and
- (c) identify, in consultation with the social partners, roles and responsibilities with respect to career information and guidance, employment services, training providers and other relevant service providers; and
- (d) provide information and guidance on entrepreneurship, promote entrepreneurial skills and awareness among educators and trainers of the important role of enterprises, among others, in creating growth and decent jobs.

21. Members should, in consultation with the social partners, and while taking into account the impact of data collection on enterprises, support and facilitate research on human resources development and training, including:

- (a) learning and training methodologies, including the use of information and communication technology in training;
- (b) skills recognition and qualifications frameworks;
- (c) human resources development and training policies, strategies and frameworks;
- (d) investment in training, and the effectiveness and impact of training;
- (e) identifying, measuring and forecasting the trends in supply and demand for skills, competencies and qualifications in the labour market;
- (f) identifying and overcoming gender bias in skills assessment; and
- (g) using the information obtained through research to guide programme planning and implementation.

IX. INTERNATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

22. International and technical cooperation in human resources development and training should:

- (a) promote greater opportunities for women and men to obtain decent work;
- (b) promote national capacity building to reform and develop training policies and programmes, including developing the capacity for social dialogue and partnership building in training;
- (c) promote the development of entrepreneurship and decent employment and share experiences on international best practices;
- (d) strengthen the capacity of the social partners to contribute to dynamic lifelong-learning policies, in particular in relation to the new dimensions of regional economic integration, migration and the emerging multicultural society;
- (e) promote national, bilateral and regional recognition and transferability of skills, competencies and qualifications;
- (f) increase technical and financial assistance for less advanced countries and promote, at the level of the international financial institutions and funding agencies, coherent policies and programmes which place education, training and lifelong learning at the centre of development policies; and
- (g) promote technical cooperation between and among governments, the social partners, the private sector and international organizations on all other issues and strategies encompassed in this instrument.

