

SAP-FL Newsletter



Discover the new ILO [video](#) on deceptive recruitment. The story of a journey in search of a decent job ... ending in forced labour.

Strengthening action to end forced labour

As of today, on May, 28 2014, the International Labour Conference (ILC) will start discussing a standard-setting item to address implementation gaps to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures, to effectively achieve the elimination of forced labour.

A [new report](#) has been published on the basis of the replies received from governments and organizations of employers and workers to the questionnaire on the scope and content of a possible instrument or instruments. It contains the substance of their observations, as well as those from other international organizations, together with the Office's commentary on the replies and on the proposed texts of the possible Protocol and/or Recommendation.

A [second volume](#) contains the French and English versions of the proposed instrument(s) on action to end forced labour. If decided by the ILC, the draft texts will be the basis for discussion in June of the standard-setting item on the elaboration of a Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), supplemented by a Recommendation, or of an autonomous Recommendation.

See also our [FAQ](#) about the standard-setting discussion

2014 News

- A new ILO standard on forced labour?
- Workers' rights in Qatar
- The economics of Forced Labour

2013 Highlights

- Africa call to end forced labour
- ILO mission in Uzbekistan
- Protecting migrant workers

Addressing the roots of forced labour

Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), condemned forced labour as “bad economics” as he delivered the inaugural [address](#) at the [Centre for the Study of International Slavery \(CSIS\)](#), on 21 February 2014.

“We need integrated approaches which recognize the socio-economic root causes of forced labour. We have to get at those roots. What exactly does this mean? It means working with employers to strengthen their due diligence against forced labour in their activities – including their supply chains. It means working with Governments to strengthen law, policy and enforcement. It means working with trade unions, and with civil society allies to represent and empower those at risk. In other words, this is very much a tripartite endeavour – and the ILO’s fundamental added value is that we can bring its tripartite constituency of governments, employers and workers to the task. “

According to a new ILO report, [Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour](#), forced labour in the private economy generates [US\\$ 150 billion in illegal profits](#) per year.

Two thirds of the estimated total of US\$ 150 billion, or US\$ 99 billion, came from commercial sexual exploitation, while another US\$ 51 billion resulted from forced economic exploitation, including domestic work, agriculture and other economic activities.

“This new report takes our understanding of trafficking, forced labour and modern slavery to a new level,” said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

“The continued existence of forced labour is bad for its victims, for business and for development. It is a practice that has no place in modern society. And it’s time that we act together. Our new report adds new urgency to our efforts to eradicate this hugely profitable, but fundamentally evil source of shame once and for all.”

Launch of a new knowledge-sharing platform on forced labour

The ILO AP-Forced Labour Net is an online community of practice that brings together experts and practitioners for individuals, organizations, and institutions, working on issues related to forced labour, human trafficking and slavery in the Asia-Pacific region.

Resources and services available on the platform include a blog, online discussions, resource library, an e-learning tool, events calendar, and an “Ask the Experts” function. All interested experts and practitioners are invited to join the community and to share resources, experiences and ideas.

The first online discussion will run from 22 April to 2 May, and will focus on the question: [What is forced labour, human trafficking and slavery? Do definitions matter, and why?](#)

[“Coherence or fragmentation? Towards joint action against forced labour, human trafficking and slavery”](#) is the first entry in the new AP-Forced Labour Net blog written by Beate Andrees, Head of ILO Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL).

The platform also provides access to the [ILO e-learning tool on forced labour](#), including modules on legal framework, definitions and indicators, as well as protecting and assisting victims.

Joining the platform is easy, you only need to register [here](#).

On 24th March 2014, Ecuador became the [13th country](#) to ratify the ILO [Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 \(No. 189\)](#), after Bolivia, Germany, Guyana, Italy, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa and Uruguay.

ILO report on alleged non-observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

In March 2014, the ILO Governing Body approved the report of the tripartite committee set up to examine the alleged non-observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29).

The committee encourages the Government to strengthen its efforts to address the non-payment of wages and retention of passport of migrant workers.

The committee recalls that the situation of vulnerability of migrant workers requires proactive measures to assist them in asserting their rights without fear of retaliation, including by facilitating their empowerment, such as the right to join organizations of their own choosing.

Moreover, the committee encourages the Government to take measures to ensure protection of suspected victims of forced labour, including effective measures to provide support and shelter throughout any complaints procedures, as this constitutes an important element in ensuring their access to justice.

Furthermore, recalling the particularly vulnerable situation of domestic workers, the committee considers it essential that legislation guaranteeing their labour rights be adopted as a matter of urgency.

The Government was requested to review without delay the functioning of the sponsorship system so that the system does not place migrant workers in a situation of increased vulnerability to the imposition of exploitative work from which they cannot leave; to ensure without delay access to justice for migrant workers, so that they can effectively assert their rights, including by strengthening the complaints mechanism and the labour inspection system, as well as through the empowerment of migrant workers; to ensure that adequate penalties are applied for violations relating to forced labour contained in the Penal Code, the Labour Law and Law No. 15 of 2011 on combating trafficking in persons.

Christian organizations against trafficking

The [Coatnet](#), an anti-trafficking network comprising 37 [Christian organizations](#) from around the globe.

Representatives of the network gathered in Madrid [from 20 to 23 January 2014](#) to discuss a future strategy for the network. They spoke of a variety of issues relating to labour exploitation versus decent work, and the need to advocate for the greater knowledge and ratification of Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. The ILO took part in the meeting, and presented its approach and work in the field of forced labour and trafficking, with a specific focus on the domestic work sector.

In 2013, the ILO and Caritas embarked in a research project in 2013 to analyse the ability of migrant domestic workers who have been exploited in Lebanon to access justice. This is an innovative research endeavour, with Caritas allowing for the first time researchers to use content from its database. Research findings will be available as of April 2014.

Many issues were discussed including the shame victims felt at having been duped and how this deterred them from returning home; individual organizations' work to raise awareness among communities; the use of previously trafficked peers to communicate the potential dangers; the role of agencies and intermediaries who befriend potential victims; the astuteness of traffickers in finding new and innovative ways to traffic people; the necessity to strengthen the cooperation for victims assistance between organizations in countries of origin and destination, as well as to expand the network to countries where many migrant workers are working.

Many of the speakers and participants reiterated the need for legal channels for labour migration, as the lack of it makes people more vulnerable to trafficking.

Africa call to end forced labour, slavery and human trafficking

The First [Regional Tripartite Conference](#) on combatting Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Slavery-like practices in Africa gave a strong sign of the renewed commitment of African countries to tackle these issues. The ILO estimates that almost 3.7 million people are victims of forced labour in Africa.

Organized by the ILO in Lusaka, Zambia, on 19 – 20 November 2013, the conference brought together about 85 participants, including governments' delegates, workers' representatives and employers' organizations from several African countries, as well as researchers and experts, regional and international organizations, and donors.

Many high-ranking officials participated in the conference, including Hon. Edgar Lungu, Acting Vice-President and Minister of Home Affairs, Zambia; Hon. R. Mbulu, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Security, Zambia; Ms Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons and Ms Gulnara Shahinian, Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

Many topics were covered but a clear focus was given to the root causes, push and pull factors, including “the demand for cheap labour, which is a consequence of wanting to produce products at the lowest possible cost”, as highlighted by Hon. Edgar Lungu in his keynote [address](#). The lack of information was also stressed and participants encouraged governments to work with the ILO on the production of reliable data.

As emphasized in the [background report](#) to the conference: “To truly overcome forced labour in Africa, what we need is a collective effort towards establishing a fundamental policy shift”.

In working groups and outside sessions, participants worked to draft a [final communiqué](#), unanimously adopted on the last day:

*“We, the participants (...) are united in our concerns about the continued use and existence of forced labour and related practices in Africa.
(...)”*

We call on the resolve of governments and social partners of Africa to abolish all forms of contemporary forced labour, human trafficking and slavery within the shortest possible time.”

Participants acknowledged the measures already taken, the efforts made as well as the legal instruments adopted but urged governments to enforce these laws and implement relevant policies, including through labour inspection, organization of workers and sensitization of employers.

They encouraged governments to address root causes, especially combatting discrimination and poverty, as well as promoting full access to labour market and safe migration, and to improve coordination between countries to reinforce prevention and protection measures.

Participants also expressed their support to the ILO standard-setting process (see Editorial) and encourage countries to ratify the Domestic Workers Convention 2011 (No 189).

“Acting on these proposals requires political will dedication and strong partnerships, at the national, regional and international levels, involving governments, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society, the media and other stakeholders. We affirm our commitment to put these proposals into action and to make the elimination of forced labour, human trafficking and slavery a reality in Africa.”



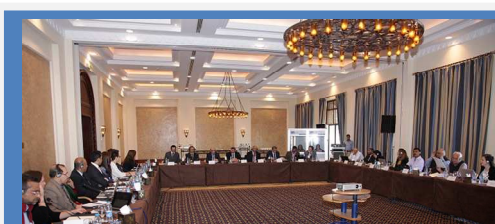
How to improve media reporting on migration and trafficking in the Arab States?

This was the issue discussed during an inter-regional consultation of senior media executives in Jordan.

Hosted by the ILO and organized by Panos Europe, under the patronage of the Ministry of Labour, it aimed at building partnerships with the media, and fostering quality reporting on migration and migrant workers.

Senior media executives from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ethiopia brought a wealth of experience in making and setting the news, and openly shared challenges they face when reporting on migration and exploitation of migrant workers.

Dr. Azfar Khan, Senior Migration Specialist in the ILO's Regional Office for Arab States, explained that this initiative stems from the ILO's project on better migration governance (MAGNET), and puts in place the first step towards working with the media to support the ILO strategy in the region to improve labour migration governance and combat human trafficking. Migration experts and civil society actors working in the field also participated in the discussion.



The event was 'off the record', giving editors and journalists an opportunity to speak without constraint.

"Reflecting on reporting on migration is critical", said Hamada Abu Nijmeh, Secretary General of the Jordanian Ministry of Labour. "The developmental and awareness-raising aspects of the media today set society's cultural agenda and sometimes even drive public opinion. Because of this role, the media may sometimes be able to do what politicians and decision-makers are unable to."

Dr. Ibrahim Awad of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies insisted on the responsibilities of the media to "dispel myths and misconceptions about labour migration".

Major resolution to improve statistics on forced labour

For the last 7 years, SAP-FL has been working with National Statistical Offices and research agencies worldwide to design and implement statistical surveys on forced labour and human trafficking.

Surveys covered populations as varied as children in dry fish industry in Bangladesh, child beggars in Mali, migrant families in Guatemala. Currently, there is work in progress to estimate the ratio of workers in forced labour among returned migrants in Sri Lanka, among returned migrant domestic workers in Ethiopia and among internal migrants in Nepal.

Altogether, nearly twenty surveys have been designed. Scope and target groups could differ from one survey to the other but all used the same operational definition of forced labour and sets of indicators.

SAP-FL presented the results of such surveys to the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and stressed the need for standard tools. In October 2013, the ICLS adopted a recommendation that the "the Office sets up a working group with the aim of sharing best practices on forced labour surveys in order to encourage further such surveys in more countries. The working group should engage ILO constituents and other experts in discussing and developing international guidelines to harmonize concepts, elaborate statistical definitions, standard lists of criteria and survey tools on forced labour, and to inform the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians on the progress made."

This will pave the way for mainstreaming forced labour in the topics included in the regular data collection exercises in all regions.

The ICLS, convened by the ILO every five years, gathers representatives from member States and from employers' and workers' groups.

It makes recommendations for adopting international standards on labour statistics to guide countries and promote international comparability of data.

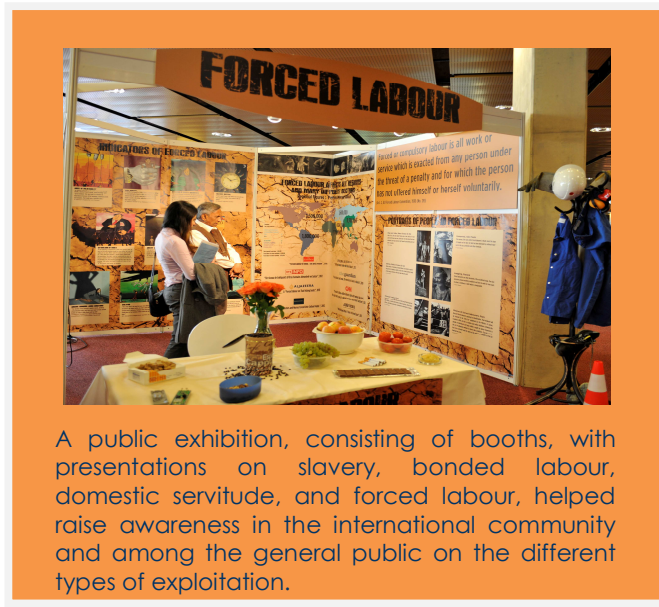
ILO called for more international cooperation to fight human trafficking

On [October 18th](#), 2013, in Geneva, Switzerland, the [Anti-Trafficking Week](#) was launched at the request of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in coordination with the ILO, the Organization of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The event was opened by M.s Simonetta Sommaruga, Federal Counselor and Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, Mr. Claude Wild, Head of Human Security Division, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, Ms. Gulnara Shahinian, as well as high level representatives of organizing agencies.

"The scale and diverse nature of the problem calls for comprehensive solutions: strict punishment of those who benefit from exploitation must be complemented by strong preventive measures", ILO Deputy Director-General [Greg Vines](#) says, addressing the [opening event](#). Such preventive measures include strengthening labour law, providing access to skills, information and training, as well as improved victim care and compensation.

During the opening, a panel discussion brought together several eminent legal experts to discuss the legal definitions of human trafficking and various forms of human exploitation, including slavery, servitude, forced labour and bonded labour.

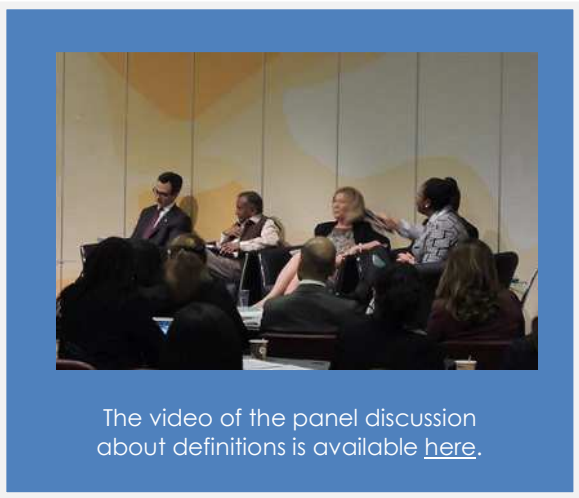


Jean Allain, Professor of Public International Law and expert on slavery, Anne Gallagher, Australian lawyer, expert on human trafficking, Babu Mathew, Professor and expert on bonded labour, and Thiago Gurjão Alves Ribeiro, Labour Prosecutor in Mato Grosso, Brazil, widely discussed legal definitions and more precisely the relationship, differences, overlap or hierarchy between and among the concepts of trafficking, forced labour, slavery and servitude.

The implications of the existing international legal framework and the lack of conceptual clarity for international cooperation and policy development were also debated.

During the [week](#), a conference, [panel discussions](#), exhibitions and other events highlighted the fact that forced labour does not only occur in developing countries.

In the European Union alone, about 880,000 people are in forced labour, according to ILO estimates. That's 1.8 in every 1,000 persons.



Protecting migrant workers

The ILO hosted in November 2013 a five-day tripartite technical meeting on labour migration to discuss [key issues](#), including the vulnerability of migrant workers to abuse, exploitation and fraudulent recruitment practices that can lead to forced labour in the worst cases. The meeting brought together 12 governments', 12 employers' and 12 workers' representatives.

Participants stressed the need for the effective protection of migrant workers, with reference to the particular vulnerabilities of low-skilled and middle-skilled workers.

IOM Director-General William Lacy Swing who was invited to speak at the meeting said "Large-scale immigration is inevitable, given the demographic figures we know, it is necessary if jobs are going to be filled, skills are going to be available and economies are to flourish, and it is absolutely

desirable if we have the right policies and implement them in a humane, orderly and safe manner."

The meeting adopted [conclusions](#), in view of establishing priorities for the Office moving forward. Emphasis was put on the effective protection of migrant workers, including by securing access to remedies in case of abuse, improving enforcement of labour rights and promoting fair recruitment practices.

"We need improved governance of labour migration as a clearly stated goal." ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said, "That will entail safe, ethical recruitment practices, ensuring effective matching of labour supply and demand - also though skills recognition and certification - and ensuring the portability of social security benefits."

2013 Cotton harvest in Uzbekistan

For several years, the ILO supervisory bodies have been addressing comments to Uzbekistan concerning the application of Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Convention No. 105 on the Abolition of Forced Labour.

In its December 2012 session, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations [urged](#) the Government to take immediate and effective time-bound measures to eradicate the forced labour of, or hazardous work by, children less than 18 years in cotton production, as a matter of urgency, and to accept an observer mission in order to assess the implementation of Convention No. 182.

The ILO high-level mission on the monitoring of child labour during 2013 cotton harvest took place from 11 September until 31 October 2013. The monitoring unit, made 806 documented site visits across the 8 zones, including farms, households, and schools and conducted 1,592 documented interviews across the country, without any restriction of their movement and access.

Their mission report concluded that some child labour took place during the cotton harvest but to a limited extent (57 cases confirmed of children aged 16 and 17 years) and not on a systematic basis. Widespread awareness of national

instructions to not allow the children under 18 years in the cotton harvest was noted.

The mandate of the monitoring was limited to the scope of Convention No. 182, and consequently, the results could not either establish or deny reported practices of forced labour of adults.

In November 2013, the Government of Uzbekistan expressed its readiness to broader cooperation with the ILO, including for eradicating forced and child labour. The Committee of Experts [requested](#) the Government to provide information in 2014 on concrete measures taken in this respect.

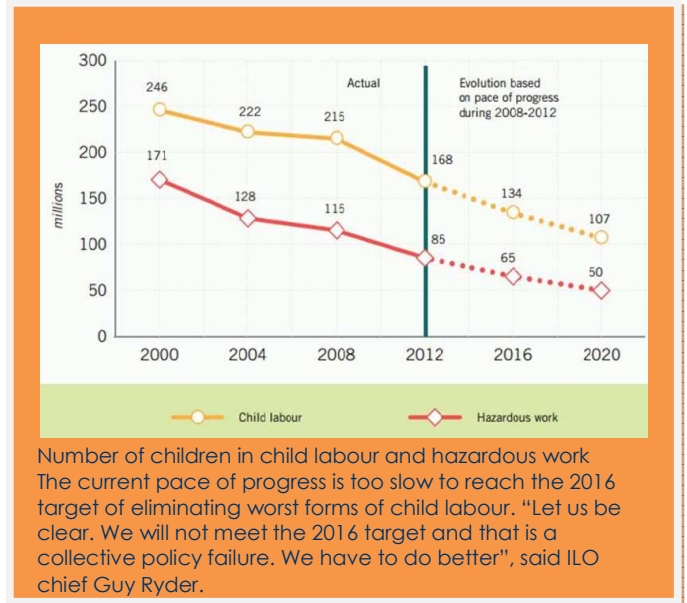
The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations is an independent body composed of legal experts who meet annually to examine the application of international labour standards worldwide. In its [2014 report](#), the Committee has assessed the situation of forced labour in more than 80 countries, highlighting good practices as well as requesting governments to take further measures to ensure the effective elimination of forced labour practices, such as bonded labour, vestiges of slavery, trafficking in persons and state-imposed forced labour for development and economic purposes, as well as the imposition of forced labour as a punishment for the expression of political views.

“We owe children a future without exploitation”

In June 2013, the [III Global Child Labour Conference](#), hosted by the Brazilian Government, provided an opportunity for governments, social partners and civil society to reflect on the progress made since the [2010 Child Labour Conference](#) and to discuss ways to step up efforts towards the elimination of child labour – especially its worst forms. “We owe all children a future without violence, without fear and without exploitation”, declared Brazilian President, Dilma Rousseff.

According to the latest [ILO global report](#), the number of child labourers has declined by one third since 2000, from 246 million to 168 million. Despite the global economic crisis and its aftermath, the decline was greatest during the most recent period (2008-2012), thanks to integrated policies and investments made in education, law enforcement and social protection.

Half the world's child workers are trapped in the worst forms of child labour - including 5.5 millions in forced labour – and work in agriculture, mines and factories, commercial sexual exploitation, illicit activities such as drug trade or are forced to join armies and militias. The total number of children aged 5-17 years in hazardous work declined by over half during this 12-year period, from 171 to 85 million.



“We are moving in the right direction but progress is still too slow”, said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. “The call from Brasilia must be for a renewed, collective effort.” The need for reinforced national and international action in the follow-up of the Conference was acknowledged by all participants in the [Brasilia Declaration on Child Labour](#).

Paraguay: Raising Awareness of law enforcement on Forced Labour and Child Labour

Labour inspectors, judges, attorneys and public defenders in Paraguay have a stronger understanding of how to identify and investigate cases of forced labour and child labour thanks to a series of capacity building workshops conducted by the ILO.

Funded by the United States Department of Labour (USDOL) and held between September and December 2013, the workshops assisted about 170 participants in the day to day investigation of these issues while touching on relevant legal, regulatory, monitoring and enforcement measures.

The workshops were conducted in close coordination with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the

General Directorate for Human Rights and Supreme Court of Justice.

In particular, the workshop in the Chaco region addressed the close link between forced labour and discrimination, amongst the country's indigenous population.

Among the main issues identified during the workshops was the lack of a common understanding on a definition of forced labour among participants, poor detection systems, as well the limited mandates of law enforcement actors in local communities, such as labour inspectors and justices of the peace.

ILO Special Action Programme to combat Forced Labour

Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch

E-Mail: forcedlabour@ilo.org Web Site: <http://www.ilo.org/forcedlabour>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/forcedlabour

Our vision is that no person, of any age, race, origin or religion, anywhere, spends a day of his or her life working under duress and suffering degrading or inhuman treatment.