Instructions for the preparation of documents for submission to the Governing Body

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▶ 1. Introduction

The purpose of these instructions is to assist authors in the preparation of documents for submission to the Governing Body in compliance with the conditions set out in the *Policy governing ILO official documents*, IGDS No. 357 (version 2). They have been prepared by the Official Documents Branch (OFFDOC) of the Official Meetings, Documents and Relations Department (RELMEETINGS).

Separate instructions for the preparation of reports for submission to the International Labour Conference and other official meetings are available on the RELMEETINGS intranet page.

This is a working document and the information it contains is subject to change, so please make sure that you are using the latest version available. For any questions or suggestions, please get in touch with the Document Coordination and Translation Support Unit (DCU) at rodis@ilo.org.

1.1. Deadlines and word limits

As set out in the *Standing Orders of the Governing Body*, documents prepared by the Office relating to items on the agenda must be published on the website in the three official languages at least 15 working days before the opening of each session (30 working days in the case of programme and budget proposals).

The deadlines given to authors for submitting their documents to OFFDOC are established taking into account the time required for each step in the process in order to meet the publication deadline.

Word limits have been established in response to the demand of the ILO constituents for a significant reduction in the overall volume of official documentation. They are also set to ensure sufficient time for processing by OFFDOC and provide guidance on the level of detail required.

A list of submission and publication deadlines and word limits is available on the RELMEETINGS intranet page.
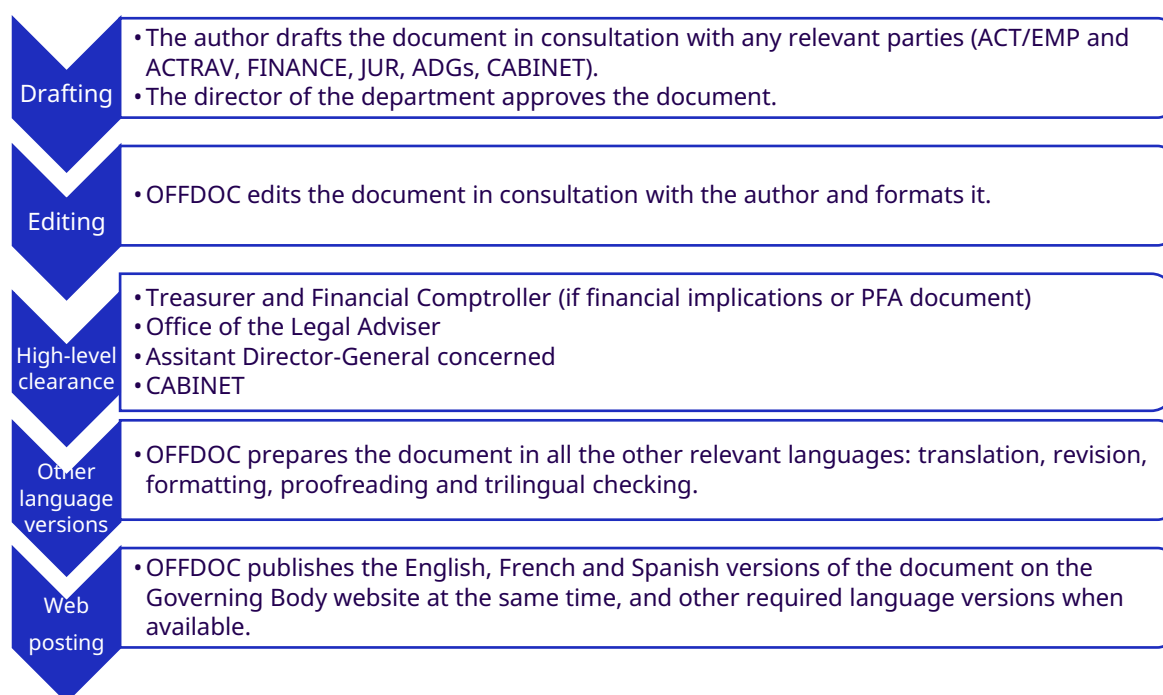
	Failure to meet the deadlines will result in late publication, which may result in: • deferral of the item to the following session; and • complaints from Governing Body members. By following these instructions, you will contribute to the timely publication of good quality documents and a smooth work process.

1.2. Document production process

The process for preparing Governing Body documents is as follows:

Drafting
- The author drafts the document in consultation with any relevant parties (ACT/EMP and ACTRAV, FINANCE, JUR, ADGs, CABINET).
- The director of the department approves the document.

Editing
- OFFDOC edits the document in consultation with the author and formats it.

High-level clearance
- Treasurer and Financial Comptroller (if financial implications or PFA document)
- Office of the Legal Adviser
- Assitant Director-General concerned
- CABINET

Other language versions
- OFFDOC prepares the document in all the other relevant languages: translation, revision, formatting, proofreading and trilingual checking.

Web posting
- OFFDOC publishes the English, French and Spanish versions of the document on the Governing Body website at the same time, and other required language versions when available.

The RELMEETINGS Official Documents Information System (RODIS) is used to manage the workflow. Further information on how to use the system is provided on the RELMEETINGS intranet page.

▶ 2. Preparing your document

In order to ensure smooth processing, it is essential that your document meets a number of requirements, in addition to being submitted on time. In this part, you will find information that will help you to prepare a document that is in line with these requirements.

More detailed guidance on specific editorial matters may be found in the *ILO house style manual.* Some writing tips to help ensure that your document is clear and adheres to the agreed word limit can be found in the *Instructions for the preparation of reports for submission to the International Labour Conference and other official meetings* on the RELMEETINGS intranet page*.*

It is good practice to consult as early as possible in the drafting phase the relevant Assistant Director-General, the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller if there are financial implications, the Office of the Legal Adviser (JUR) if there are legal implications, and Office of the Director-General (CABINET). Doing so makes the high-level clearance process considerably smoother.

2.1. Templates and models

- Please prepare the text in a Word file using the template received from the DCU.

- Refer to the latest published versions of previous documents of the same type and use these as models, as appropriate.

- Documents that are based directly on previously issued documents must be prepared using the latest published versions of those documents, made available by the DCU, and not the versions originally submitted to OFFDOC (which will not include any edits or corrections that might have been made by OFFDOC).

2.2. Cover page

Most Governing Body documents have a cover page. The cover page for documents that are submitted for discussion is different from that for documents that are submitted for information (see samples in the appendix).

The following document types do not have a cover page, just the Governing Body header on the first page:

- one- or two-page documents (such as documents concerning the approval of minutes);

- addenda;

- documents on the composition, agenda and programme of standing bodies and meetings; and

- reports of committees, working parties and certain other bodies.

2.3. Basic layout and formatting

- ✓ Make sure that the hierarchy of headings is clear.

- ✓ Keep the use of italics, bold text or inverted commas to a minimum.

- ✓ Do not use underlining.

- ✓ Ensure that the style of any bulleted lists is consistent throughout the document.

- ✓ Use tables, figures and boxes in moderation if they give information better or more economically than text.

2.4. House style

	- Spelling and punctuation generally follow Oxford English rules. The first spelling listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary* should be used, for example -ize, not –ise. This does not apply to direct quotations and to titles of organizations, publications and instruments that use different spelling rules.
	- Use abbreviations sparingly. When used, they must be written out in full the first time they occur in the body of the text, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. This does not apply to headings. As a rule,

a term should be abbreviated only if it appears three times or more within a text.

- Examples of terms that may be abbreviated include:
  - ✓ names of organizations;
  - ✓ terms that are well known by their abbreviation; and
  - ✓ frequently used terms that are long and awkward if written in full each time.

- Examples of terms that should not normally be abbreviated are:
  - ✗ core concepts of the ILO and other important terms, such as "Decent Work Agenda", "international labour standards" and "fundamental principles and rights at work";
  - ✗ terms that are not well known by an abbreviation, such as "non-standard forms of employment" and "unacceptable forms of work"; and
  - ✗ country names.

- Initialisms (abbreviations consisting of initial letters pronounced separately) are written with the definite article, whereas acronyms (abbreviations formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a word) are written without the definite article. For example:
  - ✓ the ILO, the ITUC, the UN
  - ✓ ISO, UNICEF, WIPO, UNEP

- Latin abbreviations should be avoided in running text, and an English equivalent used instead:
  - ✗ e.g.   ✓ for example, for instance, such as
  - ✗ i.e.   ✓ that is, namely
  - ✗ etc.   ✓ and so on.

a A	- With regard to capitalization, apply the following rule of thumb: "upper case for the specific, lower case for the generic".

- Spell out numbers from one to ten, and use numerals for 11 and above.

Exceptions:
  - ✓ Numerals are always used with "million" and "billion", and for dates, percentages, units of money or measurement, ages, times of day, page references and serial numbers.
  - ✓ Centuries are spelled out.

%	- Use the percentage symbol (%) only in tables and figures. Otherwise, use "per cent".

	• Write out currencies in full on first reference; thereafter, a shorter form is used. Where space is limited, the ISO code may be used. Exceptions: US$, £, € and CHF are used without explanation.
	• Italic type is used for foreign words and expressions not listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, titles of publications, titles of court cases and judicial decisions, and scientific notations; it may also be used sparingly for emphasis.
	• For country and area designations, use standard ILO nomenclature; the short title is generally used. Care should be taken with exceptions and special cases. Please check in the ILO's terminology database, ILOTERM.
	• Use inclusive language, avoiding generalizations on the basis of categories such as age, sex, race, religion, or physical or mental impairments.

	• Ensure that each item in a list, whether in running text or displayed with bullets or numbers, is grammatically consistent with the introductory phrase (for example, they must be all verbs or all nouns).
	
	✓ In numbered lists, use the following hierarchy, as necessary:
	
	1. [Paragraph number]
	
	   (a) [first level of the list]
	
	      (i) [second level of the list]

2.5. Footnotes and other references

2.5.1. Use of footnotes

- Use footnotes only if strictly relevant and necessary to acknowledge sources of information and opinions.

- Footnotes may be used for additional comments which may be of interest but are not crucial to the main text. They may also be used to direct readers to an alternate source for more detail on a topic. These footnotes should also be kept to a minimum.

- Information that is provided in the text should not be repeated in a footnote, and vice versa.

- When citing Governing Body documents in a footnote, just provide the document reference (not the title of the document and dates of the meeting). For example:

    [1] GB.323/PFA/1, para. 30.

- When citing Governing Body decisions, refer to the relevant paragraph of the minutes of the session in question. For example:

  [2] GB.334/PV, para. 98.

- When citing other ILO meeting documents, provide a full reference, as follows:

  [3] ILO, *Addressing Governance Challenges in a Changing Labour Migration Landscape,* ILC.106/IV (2017).

- Further guidance on the use and presentation of footnotes can be found in the *Instructions for the preparation of reports for submission to the International Labour Conference and other official meetings* on the RELMEETINGS intranet page and in the *ILO house style manual*.

2.5.2. Links

- In footnotes, links may be embedded behind the document reference (in the case of Governing Body documents) or behind the title of the document (in other cases), as shown in the examples above.

- Do not include a URL or electronic address in a footnote, unless reference is being made to a specific website, in which case the address should be written out and the link embedded behind the address, as follows:

  [3] More information is available on the Better Work website, http://betterwork.org.
  [4] All reports are available at www.unjiu.org.

- Links in the text should be used sparingly and only when there is no corresponding footnote.

- There is no need to provide links in the text to ILO legal instruments.

- Ensure that a link does not refer to a version downloaded locally or to a subscription-based publication that may not be accessible to readers outside the ILO.

- The link should be to the webpage from which you can download the PDF file (example), rather than to the PDF file itself (example).

- OFFDOC may decide to remove links during the editing and translation process for the purposes of ensuring readability and consistency across language versions.

2.5.3. Names, titles and quotations

- Carefully check all references to names and titles for accuracy and ensure that usage is consistent throughout.

- When referring to any project, programme or meeting, use the full official title on the first mention. This applies also to ILO terminology.

- Avoid using the names or acronyms of ILO departments, units or programmes (except when indicating the author department on the cover page). As readers may be unfamiliar with the organizational structure of the Office, use "the Office" wherever possible.

- Refer to ILO Conventions and Recommendations using their full short name, for example: "the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)"; shorten subsequent references to, for example: "Convention No. 189".

- Ensure that all quotations are complete and accurate and that the source is provided.

- Provide references for both direct and indirect quotations. When reproducing ideas originally formulated in another source, it is preferable to use a direct quotation with appropriate attribution than to paraphrase.

2.5.4. Cross-references

- Use internal cross-references (such as "See paragraph 62" or "as described in section 2") only when it is strictly necessary. These cross-references should be carefully checked in the draft text prior to submission, and at every subsequent step of the process (for example when approving editorial changes), as the paragraph or section numbers may have changed from those in earlier drafts.

2.6. Tables, figures and boxes

- Tables, figures and boxes may be included only if they give information better or more economically than text and if the information is considered useful for the purposes of the document. They should be as short, simple and clear as possible.

- You are encouraged not to reproduce figures from other publications; instead, consider referring to the data and citing the publication in question, as appropriate.

> Images or embedded files that cannot be edited will not be included in the document, as OFFDOC will not be able to prepare the different language versions or apply a harmonized style.

- Further guidance on the use and presentation of tables, figures and boxes, as well as examples, can be found in the *Instructions for the preparation of reports for submission to the International Labour Conference and other official meetings* on the RELMEETINGS intranet page and in the *ILO house style manual*.

2.7. Draft decisions

All documents concerning items on the agenda that are submitted to the Governing Body for discussion must include a draft decision.

Draft decisions should be:

- ✓ preceded by the heading "Draft decision";
- ✓ presented as numbered paragraphs in bold;
- ✓ drafted in their final form, in the past tense and be as clear and concise as possible; and
- ✓ written as stand-alone texts (abbreviations should be spelled out on first mention, even if they have already been spelled out in the body of the text, and references to documents should be provided in full).

Examples

▶ Draft decision

25. The Governing Body:

(a) requested governments to submit reports for 2024, under article 19 of the Constitution, on the instruments listed in paragraph 3 of document GB.337/LILS/3;

(b) approved the report form concerning those instruments set out in the appendix to document GB.337/LILS/3.

▶ Draft decision

15. The Governing Body invited the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and the Committee on Freedom of Association to continue their regular consideration of their working methods.

▶ Draft decision

52. The Governing Body requested the Director-General to:

(a) draw the attention of ILO constituents, in particular those of the European region, to the Istanbul Initiative by making the text of the Initiative available to:

(i) the governments of all member States, requesting them to communicate the text to national employers' and workers' organizations;

(ii) the official international organizations and non-governmental international organizations concerned;

(b) take the Istanbul Initiative into consideration when implementing current programmes and in developing future programme and budget proposals.

▶ 3. Submitting your document to OFFDOC

Before sending your document to OFFDOC:

✓ Make sure that the document has been approved by the director of the department.

✓ send the document and any other related files, through one of the following means:

o by uploading them in the RODIS workflow; or

o by attaching them to an email to the DCU (rodis@ilo.org).

> **If you send your document by email, you must first obtain the approval of the relevant Assistant Director-General and CABINET.**

3.1. Approval of the edited version

Once a document has been accepted by OFFDOC, it will be edited. As part of the editing process, the editor will return the document to the author by email, with tracked changes and, if necessary, queries or explanations in comment boxes. In view of the tight deadlines for approval and then translation into the other languages, authors are requested to review the editor's changes, answer any queries and to provide their approval within a short time frame – normally within half a working day, or a maximum of 24 hours, depending on the length of the document. Therefore, if you are not going to be available, it is essential to ensure that another colleague in your department can take care of this review and to communicate to the DCU the name of that person.

At this stage, the only changes that can be made are in response to the editor's queries and these must be made using tracked changes.

3.2. High-level clearance

Once the editing stage has been completed, the document will be sent through the RODIS workflow for high-level clearance.

All Governing Body documents need to be cleared by JUR, the relevant Assistant Director-General and CABINET. Documents for the Programme, Financial and Administrative Section, and all those with financial implications, first need to be cleared by the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller.

> During this process, each of the reviewers might contact you to discuss proposed changes to the text. By the time the cleared version reaches the DCU, all the corrections introduced by the reviewers must have been validated by the author unit.

Once a document has received high-level clearance, no further changes will be accepted and the preparation of all the other required language versions will begin. [1]

3.3. Translation

The translation process comprises, in fact, four distinct steps: the actual translation; revision (to ensure full conformity with the original language); formatting (which includes proofreading); and trilingual checking, to ensure consistency among the three official language versions. During the entire process, questions may arise and your input may be required to clarify issues. Until the trilingual checking is done, it might be necessary to introduce corrections in the original version.

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[1] All documents are translated into French and Spanish, while only a selection of documents is produced also in the other working languages: Arabic, Chinese, German and Russian. This selection is determined in consultation with constituents.

The terminology used in ILO documents is constantly evolving. If you have preferred translations in mind for particular terms, kindly inform OFFDOC and share any glossaries that you have prepared. OFFDOC also prepares glossaries in consultation with author units, with a view to updating constantly the ILO's terminology database, ILOTERM.

▶ 4. After publication: Revised versions and addenda

4.1. Revised versions

If there is a need to introduce changes to a document that has already been published, a revised version of the document can be issued. In that case, the suffix "(Rev.1)", "(Rev.2)" and so on is added to the original symbol. For example: GB.337/POL/3(Rev.1).

When webposted in replacement of the first version, the revised document is accompanied by a brief indication of what has been changed. For example: "In the revised version, paragraphs 4 and 9 have been updated."

	A corrigendum is a document issued to correct an error in a document that has already been published. It contains only a description of the correction itself, not the entire corrected document. As such, it has a few pages and is distributed together with the printed and web versions of the related report. As Governing Body documents are no longer distributed in printed form, corrigenda are not used for these documents. Minor corrections can be made without changing the original symbol. For more substantive changes, a revised version is issued.

4.2. Addenda

When there is a need to provide new information on the same topic covered in a previously published document, an addendum is issued. In that case, the suffix "(Add.1)", "(Add.2)" and so on is added to the original symbol. For example: GB.337/INS/13(Add.1).

Addenda can be useful when certain important information cannot be obtained within the document preparation time frame.

Appendix: Sample cover pages

1. Document for discussion

International Labour Organization

▶ GB.346/POL/X

Governing Body

346th Session, Geneva, 31 October–10 November 2022

Policy Development Section

POL

Employment and Social Protection Segment

Date: XXX
Original: XXX

Xxx item on the agenda

Title

Subtitle [if applicable]

Purpose of the document
This document... (see the draft decision in paragraph #).
Relevant strategic objective: Choose an item.
Main relevant outcome:
Policy implications:
Legal implications:
Financial implications:
Follow-up action required:
Author unit: [Name of the department].
Related documents: [Governing Body documents].

International Labour Organization

Governing Body

346th Session, Geneva, 31 October–10 November 2022

Programme, Financial and Administrative Section   **PFA**

Date: XXX
Original: XXX

Title

Subtitle [if applicable]

Summary:

Author unit: [Name of the department].

Related documents: [Governing Body documents].