



**113th Session of the International
Labour Conference**

Care Advocacy Toolkit




**113th Session of the International
Labour Conference**

Care Advocacy Toolkit

 This report was prepared by the Technical Secretariat of the Global Alliance for Care. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Alliance's members.



Content

- 4 — Introduction**
 - 5 — What is the International Labour Conference, and why is it important?**
 - 6 — Who participates in the ILC?**
 - 6 — What are the structure and procedures of the ILC?**
 - 8 — 113th Session of the International Labour Conference (2025)**
 - 9 — How is care related to this year's ILC agenda, and what are some key messages I can bring to the Conference?**
 - 13 — How can I position the care agenda at the 113th ILC?**
 - 14 — Additional resources**
- 

Introduction

In its 2025–2030 Strategic Priorities, the Global Alliance for Care (GAC) outlined several multilateral care advocacy actions and identified key multilateral spaces to promote discussions on care, influence policymakers and other stakeholders to take action on the matter, and finally, position the cross-cutting nature and centrality of care in the development agenda. The sessions of the International Labour Conference (ILC) were highlighted as an important space to advance care within the labour agenda, and **an opportunity for the Global Alliance for Care** to promote its transformative vision of care.

As part of its 2025–2030 Priority Actions, and building on members' insights and efforts, this advocacy toolkit has been designed as an information resource for Alliance members seeking to participate in the International Labour Conference and link care work to the topics of discussion. A similar toolkit was previously prepared for the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

What is the International Labour Conference, and why is it important?

The **International Labour Conference** is the highest decision-making body of the International Labour Organization (ILO). **It meets annually** in June in Geneva to discuss key issues and challenges related to the world of work.

The main functions of the ILC include:

- **drafting and adopting international labour standards (conventions and recommendations);**
- **supervising the application of standards through the Committee on the Application of Standards;**
- approving the ILO's biennial Programme and Budget;
- adopting resolutions that set guidelines for the ILO's general policy and future activities, among others¹.

The international labour standards adopted by the ILO are not binding for Member States. However, countries that ratify the conventions commit to implementing them in their national legislation and labour practices. These standards serve as a reference and guide for the development of national labour laws and regulations, **making the ILC a key forum for the advancement of labour law worldwide.**

In 2024, the 112th Session of the International Labour Conference included a specific agenda item on **Decent Work and the Care Economy**, resulting in the adoption of a resolution on the matter. The resolution represented a critical milestone in guaranteeing the rights of paid and unpaid care workers and defining the corresponding roles and responsibilities of governments, employers, and workers.

¹ International Labour Organization. (n.d.) *The International Labour Conference at a Glance*. [Here](#)

Who participates in the ILC?

The annual meeting of the International Labour Conference brings together **tripartite delegations from the ILO's 187 Member States**, as well as various **observers** representing intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations, along with representatives of non-Member States.

Tripartite delegations from each Member State (only governments can officially accredit a delegation) must include at least **two government delegates, one delegate representing employers, and one delegate representing workers**. These delegates participate independently, and each has the right to vote. Participants may also include technical advisers and substitute delegates, ministers, and other individuals who accompany the delegation without actively participating in the work of the Conference.

What are the structure and procedures of the ILC?

Plenary session: This is the central forum where reports are presented, speeches are delivered, and the texts resulting from the work of the committees are officially adopted.

Standing and technical committees: The ILC is structured around five primary standing committees² and various technical committees, which vary each year depending on the items on the agenda. These committees carry out the substantive work of the Conference, including debates, drafting, and text negotiation.

² These committees focus on matters related to finance, application of labour standards, general affairs, Conference credentials, and drafting for resolutions or other documents to be considered.

The ILO drafts and adopts conventions and recommendations through a **double discussion process**. This process unfolds over two separate annual sessions of the ILC, ensuring comprehensive consultation, drafting, and balanced tripartite negotiation.

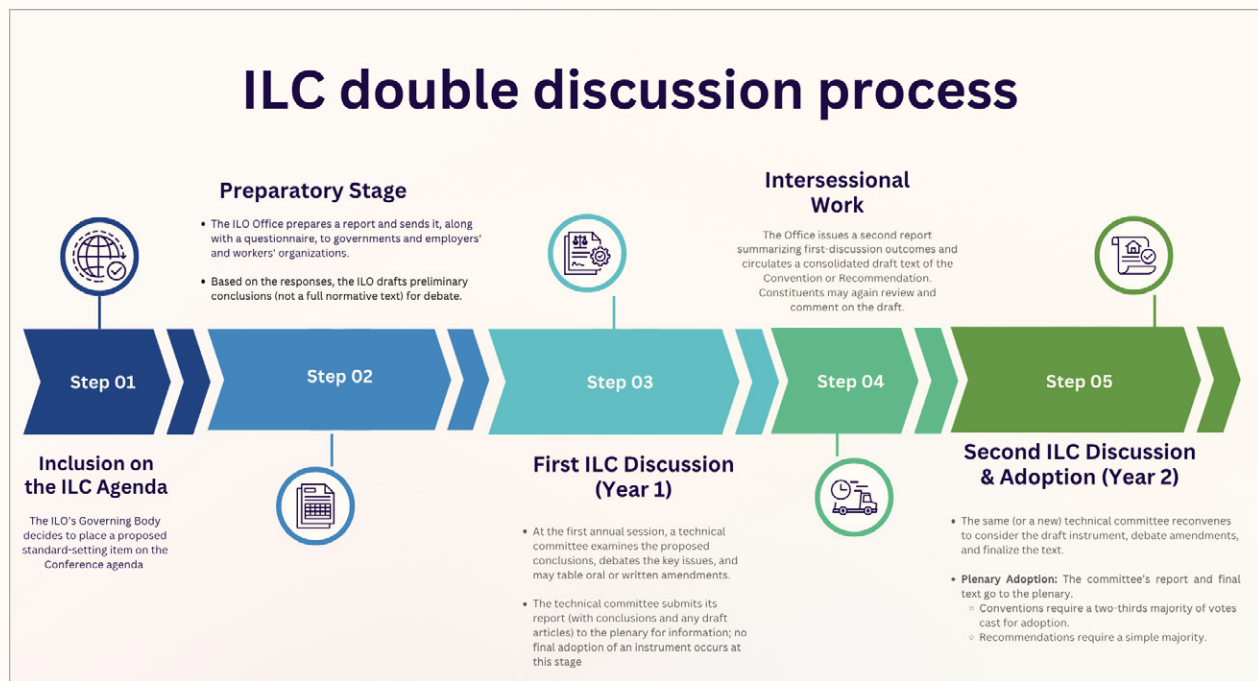


Figure 1: ILC Double Discussion Process. Prepared by the GAC Technical Secretariat with information from: International Labour Organization. (n.d.) *The International Labour Conference at a Glance*. [Here](#)

113th Session of the International Labour Conference (2025)

The 113th session of the International Labour Conference will be held from 2 to 13 June 2025 in Geneva. This year, the Conference will tackle the following issues:

Standing items

- I. Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General
- II. Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–27 and other questions
- III. Information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations

Items placed on the agenda by the Conference or the Governing Body

- IV. Protection against biological hazards in the working environment (standard-setting, second discussion)
- V. Decent work in the platform economy (standard-setting, first discussion)
- VI. General discussion on innovative approaches to tackling informality and promoting transitions towards formality to promote decent work
- VII. ILO's tripartite input to the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025
- VIII. Measures under article 33 of the Constitution to secure compliance by Myanmar with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry
- IX. Approval of amendments to the Code of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended, adopted by the Special Tripartite Committee established under Article XIII of the Maritime Labour Convention at its fifth meeting in April 2025

In addition to the standing committees, this year, the 113th session of the International Labour Conference will have three technical committees:

- Standard-Setting Committee on Biological Hazards (second discussion)
- Standard-Setting Committee on Decent Work in the Platform Economy (first discussion)
- General Discussion Committee on Promoting Transitions Towards Formality

How is care related to this year's ILC agenda, and what are some key messages I can bring to the Conference?

The ILC's Resolution concerning Decent Work and the Care Economy, along with the background report for the 112th International Labour Conference, has examined several key intersections between care-related issues and the 113th ILC's concerns. Numerous academics and organizations, including members of the GAC, have also contributed research highlighting how these labour issues affect both paid and unpaid care workers.

The labour standards and issues up for discussion at the Conference will have significant implications for paid care and domestic workers, as well as for all workers with caregiving responsibilities. As such, the Conference presents a vital opportunity to prioritize the rights, needs, and voices of paid and unpaid care workers. Several key concerns relating to this year's ILC agenda are summarized below:

Protection against Biological Hazards in the Working Environment

The proposed convention will set standards to protect all workers from biological hazards and outline the measures necessary for Member States to prevent them and deal with related accidents and emergencies properly. It will also address the responsibilities of employers and the rights and duties of workers in this

matter. Thus, it presents an opportunity to further outline and promote decent labour conditions for care workers.

Care workers, including unpaid family carers, nursing staff, personal assistants, and home-based care workers, are frequently exposed to such hazards given that they often handle waste, tend to ill persons, take care of hygienic needs, and deal with animal or plant materials³. These are particularly exacerbated during times of crises, due to conflict, climate change, or epidemics, where demand for care rises while corresponding infrastructure suffers damage. Paid care workers, the majority of whom are women, are often the last to receive protective equipment⁴. Women in these professions are often given ill-fitting, inadequate materials, and domestic workers tend to lack access to any such equipment⁵.

The proposed convention also stipulates that Member States should devise national guidance and arrangements on biological hazards, which the International Labour Office suggests should especially cover essential workers during pandemics or health crises. Care workers should be considered part of these essential workers⁶, given that they provide critical services such as health and childcare.

Advocacy to guarantee a care perspective could translate into the following demands:

- Considering care workers as essential workers who should be given particular focus in national policies on biological hazards in the workplace
- Regular risk assessments regarding biological hazards in the care sector
- Dialogue with unions of care workers in order to assess risks, establish protocols, and mitigate the risk of exposure

³ International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). (2023). *Biological Hazards and the Work Environment*. [Here](#)

⁴ Women in Global Health (WGH). (2021). *Fit for Women? Safe and Decent PPE for Women Health and Care Workers*. [Here](#)

⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO). (2022). *Securing decent work for nursing personnel and domestic workers, key actors in the care economy*. [Here](#)

⁶ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). (2021). *Gender inequalities in care and consequences for the labour market*. [Here](#)

Decent Work in the Platform Economy

Establishing labor standards (a convention and recommendations) on decent work and the platform economy would be consequential for care workers and receivers, as the recent emergence of digital platforms that match providers and consumers of goods and services has greatly affected the care economy. According to ILO estimates, a large proportion of such applications address the care sector. Due to gender norms, women are overrepresented in care sector platforms compared to others such as transport or delivery services⁷.

The platform economy has notoriously escaped labour regulations, offering workers precarious conditions and a lack of fundamental guarantees, including paid maternity or paternity leave. Women, however, are often compelled to take up such precarious jobs. Due to their flexibility, they may find them more attractive as an option, enabling them to balance work and family responsibilities⁸. Nevertheless, workers may be penalized for an inability to maintain high response rates due to care responsibilities, and mothers working in the platform economy may even have to leave children alone due to a lack of options⁹.

Decent care work in the platform economy could consist of the following elements:

- Decent work conditions, comprising decent wages, access to social protection, skill development, formalization, and the right to collective bargaining.
- Paid maternity, paternity, and parental leave for platform economy workers
- Labour inspections for platforms, including those in the care sector, to ensure compliance

⁷ ILO. (2025). *Realizing decent work in the platform economy*. [Here](#)

⁸ James, A. (2024). "Gendering Labour Law in the Platform Economy: Supporting Women Crowdworkers through Motherhood". *Labour & Law Issues*, 20(2). [Here](#)

⁹ Hunt, A., Samman E., Tapfuma, S. et al. (2019). *Women in the gig economy Paid work, care and flexibility in Kenya and South Africa*. Overseas Development Institute. [Here](#)

Promoting Transitions towards Formality

Informality is a significant issue among care workers, especially in the Global South. Around 81% of domestic workers are informally employed¹⁰. Migrants are particularly likely to be hired in informal arrangements in the care sector¹¹. Where licences and formalization processes may have been established for home-based care workers, demand still exists for informal carers¹². Women who take care of their communities during health crises or disasters are often unpaid and work in informal conditions. In general, care responsibilities tend to drive women to informal employment, where working hours are less fixed¹³.

Working without a formal contract and legal protections prohibits care workers' access to social protection while exposing care workers to exploitation, abuse, and violence. It also limits their enjoyment of benefits, including leaves and childcare facilities, among others¹⁴.

Promoting transition to formality for both paid and unpaid care workers could include the following commitments:

- Work-life balance policies in the workplace, including flexible work hours
- Paid maternity, paternity, parental and/or other care leaves, as well as access to care facilities for workers in all sectors
- Comprehensive policies for the formalization of workers in the domestic and care sectors

¹⁰ ILO. (2021). *Making decent work a reality for domestic workers*. [Here](#)

¹¹ ILO. (2024). *Migrant workers in the care economy*. [Here](#)

¹² Rocard, E. and A. Llena-Nozal. (2022). "Supporting informal carers of older people: Policies to leave no carer behind". *OECD Health Working Papers*, No. 140. OECD Publishing. [Here](#)

¹³ ILO. (2024). *The impact of care responsibilities on women's labour force participation*. [Here](#)

¹⁴ ILO and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing. (2018). *Cooperatives meeting informal economy workers' child care needs - A Joint ILO and WIEGO Initiative*. [Here](#)

How can I position the care agenda at the 113th ILC?

As outlined above, governments, workers' associations, and the private sector may participate in negotiations at the International Labour Conference, advocating for stronger language and the inclusion of care as a cross-cutting issue in discussion, resolutions and other documents to be adopted at the Conference. Other organizations may participate in the Conference as observers and take note of emerging opportunities, challenges, and conclusions.

All stakeholders may dialogue with ILC constituents (governments, especially ministries of labour or equivalents, employers, and workers' associations) to bring the connection between care and this year's agenda to their attention and advocate for its inclusion in Conference proceedings. In addition, stakeholders may want to take advantage of heightened conversations on the aforementioned issues to explore and raise awareness of these intersections through the following activities:



- Organizing and participating in events and convenings that facilitate conversation on the intersection between care and labour issues, including those featured at the 113th ILC
- Produce, compile, and disseminate useful research and data for advocacy at the 113th ILC
- Launch attractive and multimedia campaigns that offer an accessible narrative and key messages on care, labour rights, and topics featured at the 113th ILC
- Promote engagement with the Global Alliance for Care as a space for multistakeholder action on these issues and beyond

Additional resources

International Labour Organization:

- | | Download |
|--|---|
| • Conventions: | |
| > 156 (Workers with Family Responsibilities, 1981) |  |
| > 183 (Maternity Protection, 2000) |  |
| > 189 (Domestic Workers, 2011) |  |
| • Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work (2018) |  |
| • Care at Work: Investing in Care Leave and Services for a More Gender Equal World of Work (2022) |  |
| • The Road to Decent Workers for Domestic Workers (2023) |  |
| • Decent Work and the Care Economy (background report for the 112th Session of the International Labour Conference, 2024) |  |
| • Resolution on Decent Work and the Care Economy (adopted at the 112th Session of the International Labour Conference, 2024) |  |
| • Migrant Workers in the Care Economy (2024) |  |

Download

- **International Trade Union Confederation:** Putting the Care Economy in Place: Trade Unions in Action Around the World (2022) 
- **International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF):** Position Paper. VI. General discussion on innovative approaches to combat informality and promote transitions to formality in order to foster decent work: 
- **Public Services International:** Care Manifesto: Rebuilding the Social Organisation of Care (2025) 
- **UNI Global Union:**
 - Fixing the Care Crisis: Stopping the Staff Exodus, Building Resilient Care Systems (2025) 
 - Accelerating Decent Work: Formalizing Home Care and Community Health Workers 
- **UN Women:** Pathways for Decent Work in the Digitally-Enabled Care Economy in Southeast Asia (2023) 



Follow us



@GlobalAllianceForCare



@globalallianceforcare



@globalallianceforcare

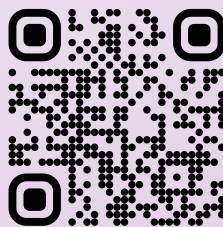


@GAllianceCare



@GlobalAllianceforCareOfficial

Visit our Website



www.globalallianceforcare.org