

LABOUR ADMINISTRATION

# MANAGEMENT OF LABOUR ADMINISTRATION

MANAGING FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

*Module 4*

# ▶ Module 4: Management of Labour Administration

## Summary

This module examines the management of labour administration from a comprehensive and strategic perspective, focusing on planning, coordination, accountability and modernization in complex governance environments. It analyses how labour administrations formulate policies, set objectives and translate strategic priorities into operational plans, while managing risks, allocating resources and coordinating actors across institutions and levels of government. The module addresses key management dimensions including strategic planning, budgeting and financial accountability, human resource management, coordination with public bodies, social partners and the private sector, reporting and monitoring, and the use of digital technologies and e-government. Particular attention is given to policy coherence, whole-of-government approaches, evidence-based decision-making, transparency and stakeholder engagement, as essential conditions for effective, resilient and trusted labour administration systems.

## Objectives of the module

- Analyse strategic planning and policy formulation processes in labour administration
- Understand how objectives, action plans and resource allocation are aligned within labour administration systems
- Examine risk management, planning environments and planning cycles in public administration
- Assess mechanisms for coordination within labour administration and with other ministries, agencies, social partners and stakeholders
- Examine budgeting, financial management and accountability as tools for implementing labour policies
- Analyse reporting, monitoring and evaluation systems as instruments for transparency and performance improvement
- Explore the role of e-government, digitalization, data sharing and artificial intelligence in modern labour administration
- Understand how policy coherence and whole-of-government approaches contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.



## A. Managing financial resources effectively. Budget, monitoring expenditures and ensuring financial accountability. Budgeting and planning cycles

### 1.1 Overview of labour administration budget

Article 10 of **Convention No. 150** states that labour administration's staff *shall have the status, the material means and the financial resources necessary for the effective performance of their duties*. Paragraph 22 of **Recommendation No. 158** refers to the appropriate arrangements that *should be made to provide the system of labour administration with the necessary financial resources (...) to promote its effectiveness*.

Financial resources are always set out in the **ministerial budget**, which is part of the general government's budget and is aimed at the implementation of the ministry's policy actions and the proper functioning of dependent units and public services. A widespread criticism has pointed to the fact that labour administrations often undergo budgetary cuts that are the result of **austerity policies**, depriving labour administrations of the resources required to be effective. It has also been criticized that a growing trend of merging the ministries of finance or economy with the ministry of labour has had a direct negative impact on social policies<sup>1</sup>.

The CEACR recognized in the *General Survey on Labour Administration in a changing world of work* that it is difficult to provide an overview and examination of the budgetary fluctuations relating to labour administrations in recent years because of limited samples, different trends of labour administration services, and different reporting methods, but noted that the budgetary allocations for labour administration had remained fairly constant in the last few years, with an increase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the Committee highlighted **a persistent lack of financial and material resources** in many labour administrations, particularly but not exclusively in developing countries<sup>2</sup>. The Committee also indicated that the lack of financial and material resources continues to be a challenge for many labour administrations and that the sparsity of financial resources affects, inter alia:

- ▶ The adequate logistical and material resources;
- ▶ The financing of adequate equipment, such as vehicles of labour inspectors;
- ▶ The suitably qualified staff and understaffing.

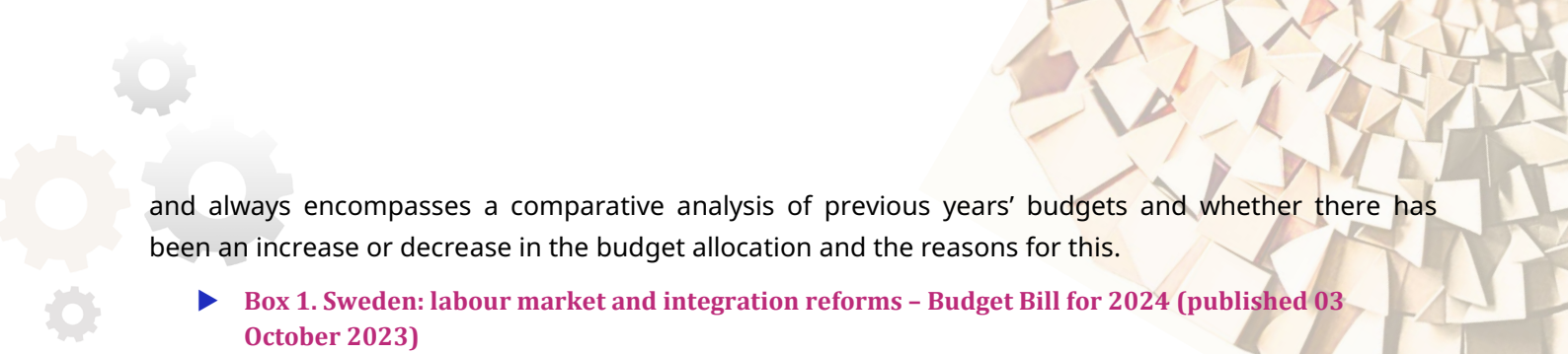
The budget of labour administration is often the **result of the discussions** held between the ministry of labour and the ministry responsible for economic and financial affairs. The reason is that finance ministries usually assume a decisive role in the determination of the departmental budgets, especially in relation to the budget limits. On the other hand, certain budget allocations of the labour departments, in particular those related to labour market and unemployment benefits policies, are in some countries preceded by consultation with social partners.

The budgets of the labour administration ministries or departments are frequently presented to the national Parliament, where a more technical **explanation** of the department's accounts takes place. In many countries, labour administration's budget and accounts are also **explained to the public**, especially the main budget lines and changes in the budgetary allocations. The consolidated budget for labour administration reflects in figures the government's commitments and priorities in social policy

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<sup>1</sup> See *Discussion of the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards, CAN/PV. General Survey*; 4 June 2024, page 2; available at <https://www.ilo.org/international-labour-conference/112th-session-international-labour-conference/committee-application-standards-ilc112-2024/discussion-general-survey-can-2024>

<sup>2</sup> See report in page 109.



and always encompasses a comparative analysis of previous years' budgets and whether there has been an increase or decrease in the budget allocation and the reasons for this.

► **Box 1. Sweden: labour market and integration reforms – Budget Bill for 2024 (published 03 October 2023)**

The Swedish budget bill for 2024 included several proposals of reforms concerning the labour market, integration and efforts to combat social exclusion. The corresponding budgetary proposals were as follows:

A more effective *Arbetsförmedlingen* (Swedish Public Employment Service): increase of the *Arbetsförmedlingen's* administrative appropriation by SEK 200 million in 2024;

Reduced volumes in matching services and introductory jobs: net reduction in expenditure of SEK 2.1 billion in 2024;

An income-based unemployment insurance fund should be introduced, and reform of unemployment insurance so that it is based on income from employment rather than on the length of time employed: SEK 50 million are set aside in 2024 to Sweden's unemployment insurance funds;

Better financial conditions for *Samhall* (a state-owned company with the task of creating jobs for people with disabilities), review of its assignment and compensation for additional costs: budget increase by SEK 988 million per year;

Phase-out of the state subsidy to ethnically based organisations: this means that the SEK 18.9 million per year set aside for the state subsidy will be redistributed as of 2024;

Continued investment in location data tools: investment of SEK 7 million in 2024 and SEK 12 million per year from 2025;

Mandate to government agencies aimed at improving conditions in areas of social exclusion: setting aside SEK 6 million per year from 2024;

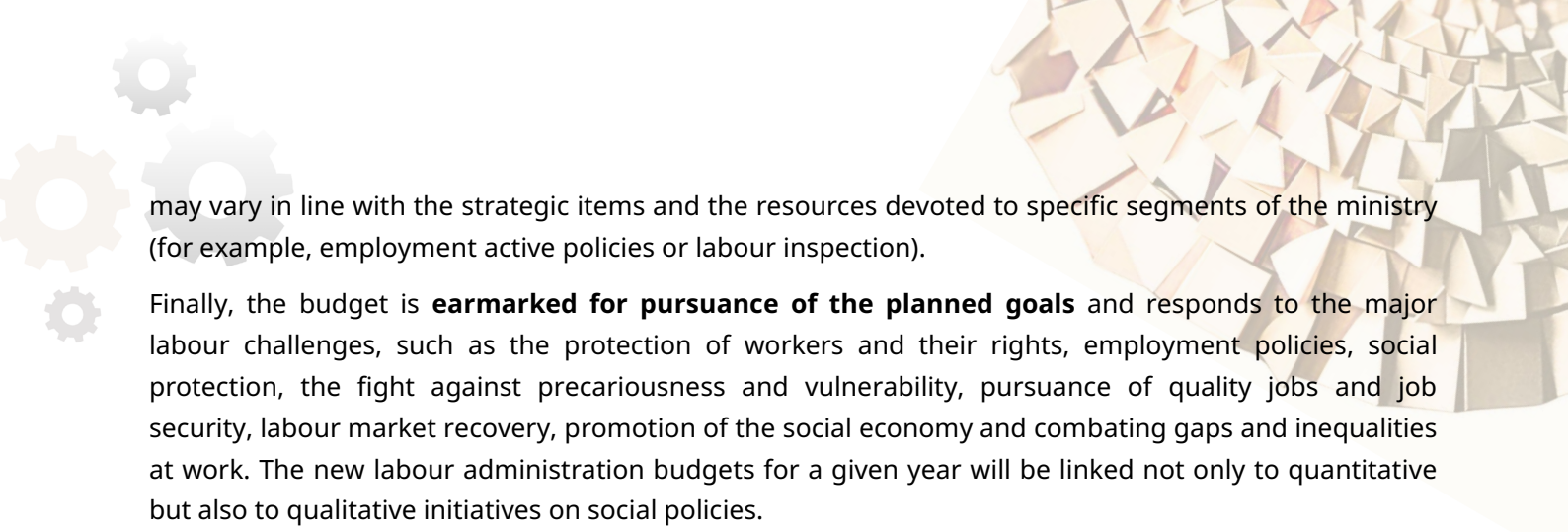
Preventive measures against gang crime: three-year investment in preventive measures against gang crime. SEK 80 million will be set aside for 2024, and an estimated SEK 150 million for 2025 and 2026.

According to the above-mentioned *General Survey*<sup>3</sup>, the **percentage of the state budget allocated to labour administration** (with available information) ranges from 0.3% to 4%, depending on the countries. This percentage may vary to a great extent according to the competencies assigned to labour administration and to the territorial organization of the country. For instance, following the said report (pgs.108-109) the percentage of the United States budget allocated to labour administration in 2023 of 0.5% was significantly low compared with the percentage assigned by France, which was up to 2,58. The explanation of this major disparity cannot be other than the territorial organization of the United States, where the different states have their own competencies and budget for labour administration while in France all services of labour administration are centralized in the Ministry of Labour, Full Employment and Integration.

The **size of the budget** may also depend to a large extent on the competences assigned to the particular ministry. If in a given country the labour ministry takes over the area of social protection and social security, the budget will be much higher because of the large expenditures stemming from the payment of pensions and other benefits (for example, unemployment). On the other hand, budgets

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/labour-administration-changing-world-work>



may vary in line with the strategic items and the resources devoted to specific segments of the ministry (for example, employment active policies or labour inspection).

Finally, the budget is **earmarked for pursuance of the planned goals** and responds to the major labour challenges, such as the protection of workers and their rights, employment policies, social protection, the fight against precariousness and vulnerability, pursuance of quality jobs and job security, labour market recovery, promotion of the social economy and combating gaps and inequalities at work. The new labour administration budgets for a given year will be linked not only to quantitative but also to qualitative initiatives on social policies.

## 1.2 Managing financial resources effectively and soundly

**Sound and effective financial management is key** for achieving policy objectives and ensuring that scarce resources are properly used and managed observing the principles of accountability to the tax payer and value for money. Efficient financial management allows labour administration to take timely decisions, to unlock synergies and to adapt to changes and disruptions.

Financial management must be inclusive, faithful to a culture where everyone feels responsible and accountable for their roles in financial planning and collaborate to avoid financial silos and over-or underspends.

### ► **Box 2. OECD: sound performance budgeting in Public Administration**

Drawing on an OECD's document on Public Administration budget performance<sup>4</sup>, several good practices for performance budgeting in labour administration could be identified and classified as follows:

#### *Budget and strategic goals*

- The rationale and objectives of performance budgeting ought to be clearly documented in a strategic document and reflect the interests of key stakeholders;
- The performance budgeting should align expenditure with the strategic goals and priorities of the government;
- The achievement of complex objectives, requiring inter-ministerial collaboration, should be supported by the central government competent body;
- Labour administration should use a mix of performance measures, balancing the need to measure longer term policy outcomes with the need to monitor progress in the shorter term;

#### *Performance budgeting methodology*

- Multi-year budget frameworks provide realistic and reliable fiscal parameters for the preparation of budget performance;
- The performance budgeting system should incorporate flexibility to handle the varied nature of services and activities and the complex relationships between spending and outcomes;

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<sup>4</sup> OECD *Best Practices for Performance Budgeting*; Public Governance Committee Working Party of Senior Budget Officials; GOV/PGC/SBO(2018)7; Public Governance Directorate; Public Governance Committee; pages 3 and following; available at [https://one.oecd.org/document/GOV/PGC/SBO\(2018\)7/en/pdf#:~:text=This%20paper%20presents%20the%20draft%20OECD%20Best](https://one.oecd.org/document/GOV/PGC/SBO(2018)7/en/pdf#:~:text=This%20paper%20presents%20the%20draft%20OECD%20Best)

### *Performance budgeting and responsibilities*

- ▶ Identified individuals and teams are responsible and accountable for the achievement of performance goals;
- ▶ Programme budgets should be properly aligned with the administrative responsibilities and services;
- ▶ Sufficient human resources and infrastructure should be in place to support performance budgeting;
- ▶ Managers should organise internal discussions to review financial and operational performance regularly through the year;

### *Performance budgeting and supervision mechanisms*

- ▶ Expenditure classification ought to be overseen and revised to facilitate budgetary programmes management and promote accountability for results;
- ▶ Budget performance is to be reported to a Central Budget Authority for supervision and accounts should be subject to audits by a higher audit institution;
- ▶ The labour administration annual budget, performance targets and level of achievement should be presented to the legislature;
- ▶ Processes of monitoring and ex post evaluation of spending programmes are necessary;
- ▶ Performance measurement encourages comparison and competition between similar entities as a means of improving effectiveness and efficiency in service provision;
- ▶ Responses to under-performance should focus on problem solving, rather than on individual financial rewards and penalties or budget cuts.

### *Performance budgeting and information*

- ▶ Accessible on-line budgetary information portals would help citizen, civil society and the media to monitor performance;

Despite of the scarcity of financial resources that drive to budgetary restrictions, budget management should take into consideration special implications. In this respect, **gender-responsive budgeting** is a growing practice in many countries and it is particularly applicable to labour administration. Gender budgeting or gender-responsive budgeting is part of a broader government effort to progress on gender equality goals. Gender budgeting pursues the integration of gender considerations into the budget decision making and also intends to close gaps in the interest of gender equality. Particularly, gender budgeting seeks to remove gender biases from government institutions. Useful guidelines explaining gender-responsive budgeting can be found in UNWOMEN<sup>5</sup>. The table below represents a way (amongst others) of how gender-responsive budgeting may be addressed.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://wrw.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/gt-guide-gender-responsive-budgeting-280218-en.pdf>

### ► Box 3. Gender-responsive budgeting

The table below has been drawn from the study carried out by Ada Shima and Nicole Farnsworth - Kosova Women's Network- called "*Budgeting for Social Welfare. A Rapid Gender Analysis to Inform Gender Responsive. Budgeting in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Kosovo*". The budget itself reflects the differences between men and women. Disaggregating some specific budget lines by gender would provide an accurate picture of the situation in a given ministry.

Table 57b. MLSW Wages and Salaries by Wage Level and Gender, 2011-2013

Month-ly Salary Level	2011				2012				2013			
	Total Budget Men	% of Budget Men	Total Budget Women	% of Budget Women	Total Budget Men	% of Budget Men	Total Budget Women	% of Budget Women	Total Budget Men	% of Budget Men	Total Budget Women	% of Budget Women
€200-400	€1,296,671	51%	€1,246,961	49%	€1,338,555	52%	€1,260,551	48%	€1,297,394	50%	€1,311,716	50%
€401-600	€638,724	68%	€294,101	32%	€645,391	67%	€317,759	33%	€692,353	67%	€342,312	33%
€601 and above	€ 63,731	88%	€22,578	12%	€163,533	100%	€ -	0%	€153,306	100%	€ -	0%

When implemented alongside other gender mainstreaming policies, gender budgeting can provide information about how gender inequalities have been addressed in a given ministry. Moreover, a whole-of-government approach to gender mainstreaming encompasses not only regulatory but also budgetary decisions. Finally, the allocation of resources to gender-responsive budgeting help deliver the necessary changes that bring social progress towards the UN SDGs.

### 1.3 Preparing the budget, structure and contents in labour administration

#### 1.3.1 Preparation of the budget

The budget of a ministry of labour is normally allocated by a **general budget law** that is drafted annually by the government and approved by the legislature. The annual budget law includes all the revenues and expenditures estimates for a given year and is prepared, approved, executed, and audited by the government.

The budget of the ministry must meet some few **requirements** and **should be**:

- Comprehensive, covering all ministry's operations;
- Transparent, with a clear budget classification;
- In line with international standards;
- Linked to policies and expenditures by means of program structure;
- Realistic, based on an updated macroeconomic framework (unemployment rate, wage levels, unemployment rate, exchange rates, inflation and price levels, average workers' earnings, hours of work and so on), including reasonable revenue projections, accurate calculation of costs and expenditures.

<sup>6</sup> Available at <http://www.civilsocietylibrary.org/CSL/818/Budgeting-for-Social-Welfare-A-Rapid-Gender-Analysis-to-Inform-Gender-Responsive-Budgeting-in-the-Ministry-of-Labour-and-Social-Welfare-in-Kosovo>

In the process of the preparation of the ministry's budget, certain questions may arise. Following the above-mentioned Guidelines, these **issues should be tackled** before and during the budget preparation such as:

- ▶ What is the budget timetable?
- ▶ How are budgeting powers distributed between the executive and legislative branches and within the executive itself?
- ▶ Is there any legislative limits on the budget?
- ▶ How are activities going to be funded?
- ▶ Is there any earmarking? (for example, constitutional or legal commitments on specific public services – for instance, labour market, occupational health-);

According to the *Guidelines for public expenditure management of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)*, the basic **steps for the preparation** of the ministerial budget are as follows<sup>7</sup>:

1. Step one: determination of a macroeconomic framework for the budget year (and ideally at least the next two years) by the ministry of finance or agreed with the minister of finance;
2. Step two: determination of the global level of expenditure and total budget amount that can be afforded without adverse macroeconomic implications;
3. Step three: allocation of this global total among to the line ministries, leaving room for reserves or contingencies agreed with the ministry of finance;
4. Step four: issuing instructions to line ministries with the indicative aggregate spending ceiling for each ministry and on how to prepare their budget consistently with macro-objectives;
5. Step five: submission of bids by line ministries to the ministry of finance or budget department;
6. Step six: negotiations between ministry of finance and line ministry;
7. Step seven : Government endorses the ministry's budget and it is included in the general budget that will go to the Parliament.

The preparation of the budget requires a clear conceptual framework of the budget and its principles. The table<sup>8</sup> below reflects a few key concepts and principles to consider when preparing a ministry's budget.

<b>State's budget</b>	The systematic expression, in figures, of the entitlements and obligations to be settled during the financial year of the labour ministry and each of the bodies depending on it.
<b>Legislation</b>	Stage Budget Law

<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/expend/guide3.htm>

<sup>8</sup> This table have been built on the basis of two sources:

- 1) The chapter 6 of the training course entitled "*The state budget in Spain: concept and structure. Budgetary appropriations: classification*" (Spanish Public Administration School); available at <https://www.inap.es/documents/10136/2375331/Tema+6+PLG3.+modificado.pdf/e61705a9-ea80-5523-2c5f-9cd215957cdf>
- 2) The study *Budget Classification* of the IMF, prepared by Davina Jacobs, Jean-Luc Héris, and Dominique Boule is a practical reference for classifying budget components; available at <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/TNM/Issues/2016/12/31/Budget-Classification-23470>

<b>Principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Budgetary stability</i> (balanced budget taking account of government deficit limit and public debt limit)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of legality</i> (legal status -constitution, organic law and financial regulations)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of competence</i> (competent administrative body)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of control</i> (internal and external)</li> <li>• <i>Respect to accounting principles</i> (compliance with general applicable accounting principles)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of comprehensiveness</i> (budget covers all operations of bodies and units in a consolidated way)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of unity</i> (the budget includes all revenues and expenditures of all bodies and units undertaking operations)</li> <li>• <i>Principle of internal consistency</i> (between current expenditure and past investments, consolidated preparation and execution of budget, leading agency -ministry of finance)</li> <li>• <i>Speciality</i> (budgetary allocation for specified expenditure, for a limited maximum amount and period of time)</li> <li>• <i>Financial sustainability</i> (capacity to finance present and future expenditure within public deficit and debt limits).</li> <li>• <i>Yearly budget</i> (compatible with medium-term budgeting and long-term perspective)</li> <li>• <i>Transparency</i> (information to the public)</li> <li>• <i>Efficiency</i> (in the allocation and use of public resources)</li> <li>• <i>Accountability</i> (attributed to each administration in the execution of the budget)</li> <li>• <i>Institutional loyalty</i> (respect for the legitimate exercise of the competences attributed to each administration).</li> </ul>
<b>Subjective scope</b>	Labour ministry and its dependant entities
<b>Budget structure</b>	Revenues budget Expenses budget
<b>Budget appropriation</b>	Specific allocation of expenditure in the budget of the ministry and/or other dependant entities which is available for the management lines in order to cover the needs for which they have been approved and appropriated
<b>Budget appropriation classification</b>	Administrative (by administrative bodies and departments) Functional (by programmes) Economic (by chapters, articles, items and sub-items)
<b>Appropriation's adjustments</b>	These involve a change in the amount, purpose or time schedule of the appropriations approved in the general State budget law by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer or addition of appropriations</li> <li>• Extraordinary or supplementary appropriations</li> </ul>



### 1.3.2 Budget classification

An important issue in the preparation of a labour ministry's budget is the classification of budget headings and items. The revenues and expenses are classified in the budget following predetermined criteria. Both the revenues and the expenses are classified following national practices and budgetary rules. According to the common characteristics of many countries, it would be possible to identify four main patterns as far as budgetary practices are concerned: francophone, Latin American, Commonwealth (British) and transition economies.

In most countries the budget is detailed in coded or numerical statements, structured in items of expenditure and revenues of the ministry or public sector entity. The GFSM (*Government finance statistics manual 2014*) of the IMF uses a specific classification of revenues and expenses. Despite the GFSM was primarily devised as a statistical reporting framework and is not sufficient for the purpose of developing a budget classification system, this manual and other IMF's studies can serve as a useful reference for budgetary classifications<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, revenues and expenses could be classified following the categories below or similar ones:

#### Revenues:

- ▶ Taxes (mainly subclassified by the base on which the tax is levied -e.g., income, expenditure, property assets, savings and so on-);
- ▶ Social contributions;
- ▶ Grants;
- ▶ Other revenues (for example, property income, sales of goods, fines, other transfers, premiums, fees and so on);

#### Expenses:

The expenses and corresponding budgetary appropriations are classified in several categories which are given specific characteristics or codes with different digits. The classification may be organized as follows:

##### A. Administrative or organic classification (responsible bodies who manage the appropriation).

- ▶ Title: Ministry
- ▶ Chapter: Managing unit

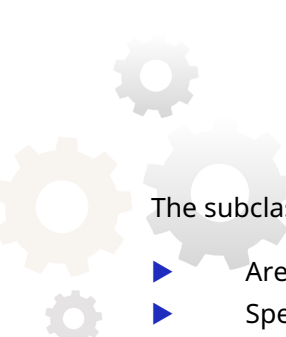
Different digit codes are used for section or service, responsible body, independent agency or other entities that are part of the labour administration.

##### B. Functional classification (ordered by programmes, purpose of the expenditure or needs of the spending policies) subclassified by:

- ▶ Main function, function or secondary function;

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<sup>9</sup> The study *Budget Classification* of the IMF, prepared by Davina Jacobs, Jean-Luc Héris, and Dominique Boule is a practical reference for classifying budget components; available at <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/TNM/Issues/2016/12/31/Budget-Classification-23470>



The subclassification also may be established by:

- ▶ Areas of expenditure;
- ▶ Spending policies;
- ▶ Groups of programmes assigned to the same purpose or according to the nature of the activities to be carried out;
- ▶ Finalist expenditure programmes with quantifiable objectives and measurable performance indicators;
- ▶ Instrumental or support programmes (management of resources necessary for the execution of activities).

**C. Economic classification** (after knowing who spends and how much, it is necessary to know what it is spent on). Appropriations are organized by:

- ▶ Section (expenses of the Ministry);
- ▶ Chapter (large areas of expenditure; for example, staff costs);
- ▶ Articles (breakdown of the chapter grouping similar expenditures);
- ▶ Items (sub-grouping expenditure of similar nature)
- ▶ Sub-items (much more detailed information on the expenditure).

There are additional forms of budget classification that may provide complementary information such as geographical location, the recipient of government transfers and subsidies, loans and grants and so on. Below is an example of how the items of a labour ministry's budget could be classified:

▶ **Box 4. Example of budgetary classification**

**Expenses**

**Administrative classification:**

- a. Section: Ministry of Labour
- b. Service: Directorate General of Employment

**Functional classification:**

- a. Area of expenditure (promotion of employment and unemployment insurance);
- b. Spending policy (access to unemployment protection);
- c. Programme group (access to reemployment services);
- d. Programme (Directorate-General for Employment);

**Economic classification:**

- a. Chapter (expenditure on goods and services);
- b. Article (new equipment, supplies and others);
- c. Item (new office equipment);
- d. Sub-item (new computer equipment);

## Revenues

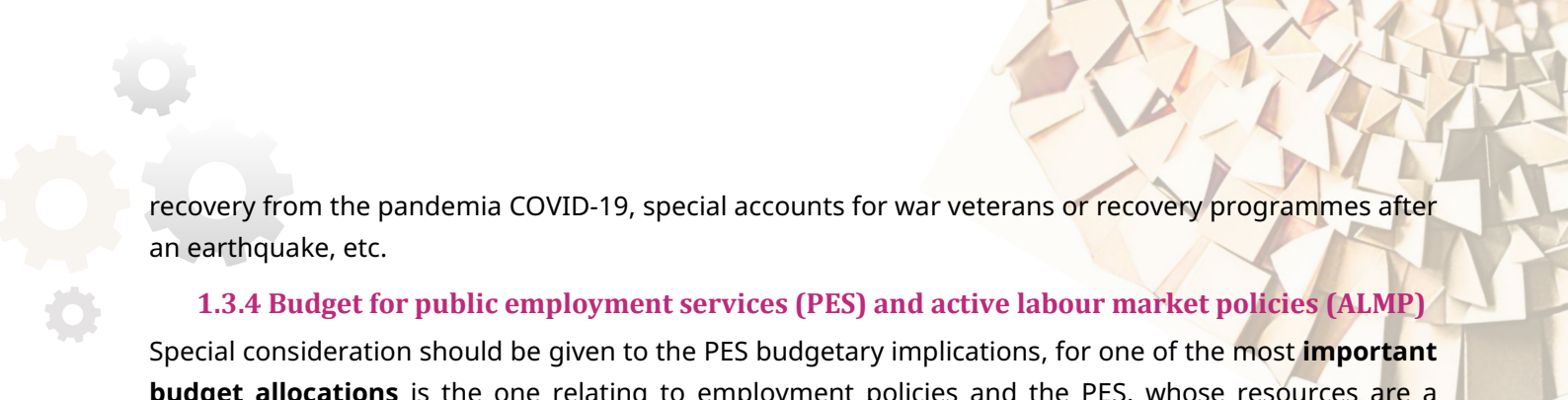
Chapter 1. Direct taxes and social contributions;  
Chapter 2. Indirect taxes;  
Chapter 3. Fees and other revenues;  
Chapter 4. Current transfers (resources received by the Ministry for which there is no counterpart);  
Chapter 5. Property income (e.g. income from Ministry's properties or assets);  
Chapter 7. Capital transfers (resources received by the Ministry);  
Chapter 8. Financial assets (disposal of financial assets);  
Chapter 9. Financial liabilities (revenue raised by the Ministry or dependant agencies- e.g. debt issuance-).

### 1.3.3 Main labour administration's budget lines and programmes

A budget for labour administration generally is **broken down into different budget lines**. The following are frequent budget allocations:

- Current expenditures
  - Staff expenditure;
  - Expenditure on goods and services;
  - Financial expenses;
  - Internal transfers and transfers to agencies under the ministry's supervision;
  - ITC investments.
- Operational expenses (depending on ministry's scope of competencies)
  - Active employment policies;
  - Social protection
  - Labour protection policies (for example, combating inequality, measures in favour of vulnerable groups);
  - Enforcement policies (labour inspection)
  - Occupational health and safety;
  - Social dialogue;
  - Social economy
  - Others

The different budget lines or programmes are again broken down into subprogrammes. For instance, social security budget line may be disaggregated by pensions, medical insurance, welfare, unemployment and so on). There may be as well special budget programmes for specific issues, such as



recovery from the pandemic COVID-19, special accounts for war veterans or recovery programmes after an earthquake, etc.

### 1.3.4 Budget for public employment services (PES) and active labour market policies (ALMP)

Special consideration should be given to the PES budgetary implications, for one of the most **important budget allocations** is the one relating to employment policies and the PES, whose resources are a major tool for promoting vocational training, professional and digital skills and access to employment, particularly for young people and vulnerable groups (for example, programmes aimed at employing women from vulnerable groups or providing incentives for hiring workers in certain rural and urban areas). The budget should be oriented towards measures that enable the reduction in the duration of unemployment and the effectiveness of labour market instruments.

Normally, the PES's budget is determined after **negotiations between the ministry of labour and the PES**, bearing in mind the budget general lines provided by the ministry of finance. The process is initiated by a proposal risen by the PES covering labour market measures and staff requirements. The part assigned to labour market is usually volume-related (linked to the number of jobseekers or unemployed workers) and it must be calculated after an estimation of expenses and number of, for instance, claimants who will require assistance. If this estimation is surpassed due to **unexpected events** or developments (for example, pandemic COVID-19), additional resources may be requested. The COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges and contributed to the redesigning of the package devoted to active labour market policies (ALMP), increasing their budget and better aligning them with the labour market situation (86% of countries), making new investments in IT infrastructure (79%) or increasing staffing levels (79%)<sup>10</sup>. The pandemic was an example of how sometimes the adoption of urgent or strategy-related decisions requires the request of additional funds to be incorporated into the budget.

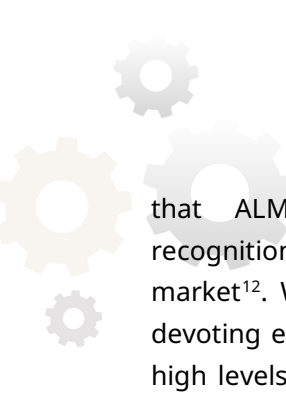
Although staffing levels are mainly determined by the advisor/client ratio, **austerity policies and budget tightening** need sometimes to be offset by the reduction and optimization of the number of ALMPs resources and the digitalization and use of AI systems, harnessing synergies coming from merging administrative bodies or units.

Another item requiring a **large budget is unemployment protection** and minimum income for social inclusion, particularly in countries with high levels of unemployment. Sometimes this is totally or partially funded by the general state budget and some other times from social contributions. On other occasions, the budget lines are used to finance the cost of redundancy programmes, especially in unfavourable scenarios, such as was the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the OECD<sup>11</sup>, about two thirds of OECD countries increased their **budget for public employment services and active labour market** measures during the COVID-19 crisis. However, these increases were not always kept over succeeding years. The OECD unveils that some countries opted not to increase the budget for these programmes during the following years, with approximately one in five countries decreasing expenditure for labour market services in 2021 by comparison with 2020. On the contrary, if the comparison is established between 2019 -before the pandemic- and 2022, the OECD has pointed out

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<sup>10</sup> OECD (2022), *OECD Employment Outlook 2022: Building Back More Inclusive Labour Markets*, OECD Publishing, Paris; page 102 available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/1bb305a6-en>

<sup>11</sup>: OECD (2022), *OECD Employment Outlook 2022: Building Back More Inclusive Labour Markets*, OECD Publishing, Paris, page 7; available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/1bb305a6-en>



that ALMP budgets were significantly higher for the latter year, a trend that implies a broad recognition, within many countries, of the growing role to be played by ALMPs in promoting labour market<sup>12</sup>. Within ALPS are specific budgetary programmes that merit strategic actions and demand devoting extra-financial resources such as those related to young people and NEETs in countries with high levels of youth unemployment-- for example, Congo Rep., Georgia, Jordan, Libya, Spain, Greece amongst others--<sup>13</sup>.

### 1.3.5 ICT budgeting

Today, a key budget allocation is the one addressed to **digitalization** and technological transformation. A modern labour administration demands sustained ICT investments which are costly and require very skilled staff. In 2015, an ILO study (Galazka) showed that an average of 70 per cent of all respondents to a questionnaire had a separated ICT budget, which suggested the importance of this area and the high level of planning of ICT investment. The percentage above was higher in developed countries (81 per cent of respondents) than in developing countries (56 per cent of respondents), so it implied different levels of commitment to further expanding ICT use<sup>14</sup>.

### 1.3.6 Budget for other relevant items

**Labour inspection** is another item of the ministry's budget which often falls short for this institution in order to carry out its work with the necessary efficiency. Financial resources shortage affect both human and material and technological resources, which makes it more difficult to combat fraud and non-compliance by companies. The budget shortage has especially affected resources needed for covering rural areas<sup>15</sup>.

Another relevant part of the budget is dedicated to the **health and safety at work** ministerial area and the agencies responsible for this field supervised by the ministerial department. This item can significantly increase the ministry's budget if large investments in measuring equipment, safety and protective equipment, testing laboratories and so on are needed and agreed.

Finally, there are two other issues to which the labour administration in many countries must allocate specific budget. One is the financing of the expenditures incurred by the tripartite or bipartite collegiate bodies and **social dialogue** activities. The other one is the resources allocated to the development of **Social Economy policies** that promote a stronger and more sustainable economic and social network, encouraging the activity, digitalization and modernization of cooperatives, as well as social economy institutions.

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<sup>12</sup> OECD *Employment Outlook 2022*, page 103.

<sup>13</sup> The list of countries for which data have been provided by ILOSTAT may be found at World Bank web <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS>

<sup>14</sup> Galazka, Anna Milena; *Report on the global survey into the use of information and communication technologies in national labour administration systems* ; International Labour Office, Governance and Tripartism Department. - Geneva: ILO, 2015; (Governance and Tripartism working paper); page 25; available at <https://www.ilo.org/publications/report-global-survey-use-information-and-communication-technologies>

<sup>15</sup> *Strengthening rural labour inspection for high-quality and productive jobs* ; ILO; available at: [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_158997.pdf#:~:text=Only%20a%20small%20proportion%20of%20agricultural%20and%20other,labour%20inspectorates%27%20lack%20of%20human%20and%20financial%20resources.](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_158997.pdf#:~:text=Only%20a%20small%20proportion%20of%20agricultural%20and%20other,labour%20inspectorates%27%20lack%20of%20human%20and%20financial%20resources.)



## 1.4 Monitoring of expenses

Most labour ministries have an internal audit unit whose **primary function** is monitoring the ministry's expenses and checking if these are in line with the approved budgetary appropriations. These units are permanently located at the labour ministry and sometimes work in the ministry under delegation of the ministry of finance. The internal audit units are oftentimes established within the independent agencies under supervision of or dependent on the labour ministry. They mainly carry out internal audits and ensure that the budget is implemented and expenditures incurred in accordance with the accounting national and international standards. The internal auditor of the labour ministry regularly checks and reports shortcomings found in connection with the budget execution, expenditures, accounts and related operations. It prevents, detects and investigates cases of fraud and alerts on weaknesses that might allow or turn into fraud.

At all events, it is usual that the internal audit unit reports not only to the ministry of labour but also to ministry of finance, which commonly exercises budgetary control through diverse appropriate mechanisms.

The audit units are often headed by a director and have to respond to the national auditor general. Their **main functions** are:

- ▶ To ensure the supervision procedures that safeguard the *ministry's assets*;
- ▶ To monitor the *execution of the budget* by the ministry;
- ▶ To report *irregularities*, if that is the case;
- ▶ To make *periodic reports* on audits carried out;
- ▶ To follow and review *instructions of the national Auditor General's*;
- ▶ To follow recommendations of *external audit reports*;
- ▶ To monitor and supervise the accounts of *dependent agencies*;
- ▶ To review all *contracts* of the ministry;
- ▶ To ensure that ministry's *expenses* are incurred in accordance to the principle of value for money;
- ▶ To review *effectiveness and efficiency* of the internal audit procedures;
- ▶ To provide *advice* to the ministry in matters subject to their competencies;
- ▶ To ascertain that the *results of the activities* of the ministry are consistent with the objectives and goals planned.

### ▶ **Box 5. Zambia: mandate of the Internal Audit Unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security**

The function and mandate of the Internal Audit is derived from section 7(3) of the Public Finance Act No. 15 of 2004 and provides for the maintenance of a system of internal audit. Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations.

The objectives of the Internal Audit Unit entail the following:

- ▶ To evaluate effectiveness of financial and operational systems/processes;
- ▶ To provide advice and guidance on control aspects of new policies, systems, processes, and procedures;
- ▶ To verify the existence of government assets and recommend improvements to management to ensure that proper safeguards are maintained to protect them from loss and possible fraud;
- ▶ To determine the accuracy of financial transactions;
- ▶ To determine the level of compliance with government policies, laws, contracts and procedures;
- ▶ To evaluate the accuracy, effectiveness, and efficiency of electronic information and processing systems and to identify opportunities for cost savings;
- ▶ To provide an advisory service to Controlling and Accounting Officers.
- ▶ To undertake any other task or assignment to further the achievement of the above objectives<sup>16</sup>.

### 1.5 Planning and budgeting cycles

Labour administration must be aware of and have **certainty of future general governmental policy directions** and must integrate its financial management into its own strategic and operational planning. There should be a close link between planning schedule, outcomes and financial resources. Likewise, labour administration's strategies and plans must be supported by a **clear view of the financial resources that are available** for accomplishing the agreed goals during then planning periods. Disaggregated budget lines have to be allocated to the planned outputs and outcomes.

The development of a strategy and a plan, its implementation, and the evaluation and reporting processes are always dynamic and complex. The **strategies and plan of actions are usually agreed for more than one year**. Although the planning and budget cycles should be synchronized, the financial resources allocated to the activities contained in the plan of action may correspond with different ministry's budget year. This means that it is normal that funds be set aside for part of the actions in a given fiscal year while other actions depend on future budgetary appropriations. For instance, the planning

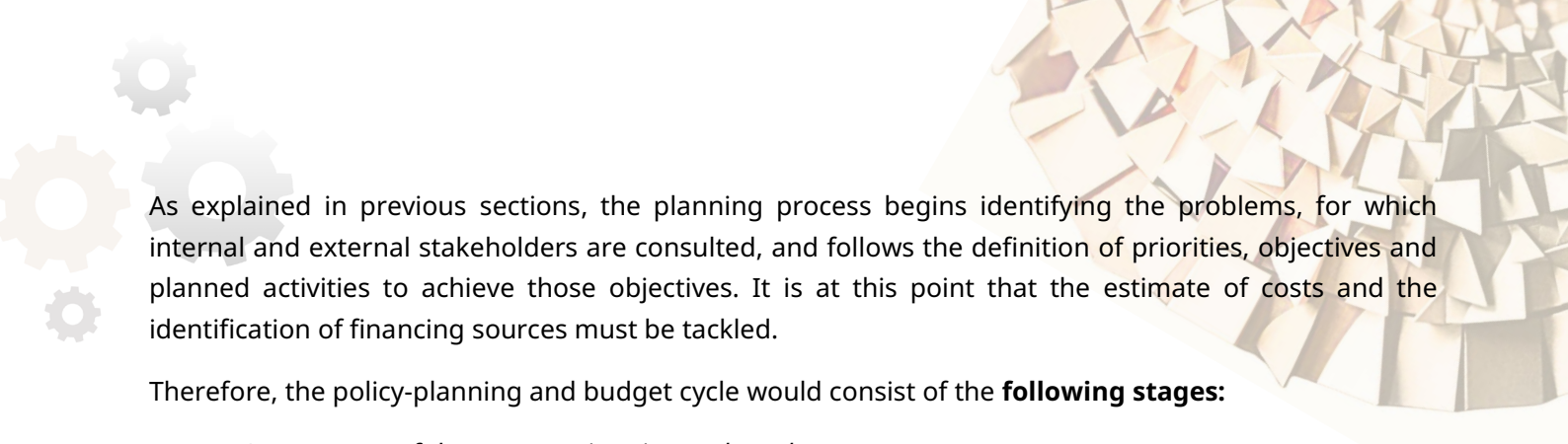
process may be either induced by short-term urgent needs and priorities or driven by long-term desired changes addressed to improving the welfare of the community. In these cases, the time frame of the budgetary cycle may either be shorter or larger.

The budgeting cycle is determined by a **top-down financial decision process**, which entails actions consisting of:

- ▶ Medium-term budgeting for multiple years (usually 3-5 years), as opposed to focusing solely on the upcoming fiscal year;
- ▶ Top-down budgeting, which implies defining spending limits based on the economic forecast, estimates of future spending on current policies and government's fiscal objectives<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> [https://www.mlss.gov.zm/?page\\_id=1833](https://www.mlss.gov.zm/?page_id=1833)



As explained in previous sections, the planning process begins identifying the problems, for which internal and external stakeholders are consulted, and follows the definition of priorities, objectives and planned activities to achieve those objectives. It is at this point that the estimate of costs and the identification of financing sources must be tackled.

Therefore, the policy-planning and budget cycle would consist of the **following stages**:

1. Assessment of the current *situation and needs*;
2. *Prioritisation of problems and objectives* (taking account of their urgency, priority scale, expected available financial resources and participant or affected institutions and stakeholders);
3. Selection of objectives, definition of indicators, baselines, targets and key activities and their *coherence* with available resources;
4. Allocation of *responsibilities*, including financial ones;
5. Precise *calculation* of the cost of planned activities and initiatives: estimates must include both economic costs and non-monetary costs that are required for executing the planned actions and enable the desired change;
6. Identification of the *sources* of financing for the agreed actions;
7. Calculation of expenses derived from *impact assessment, monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities*<sup>18</sup>.

## 1.6 Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems

### 1.6.1 Overview

**Monitoring is** the necessary exercise to find out whether planned targets have been met and **evaluation provides** information on how and why results are or are not being achieved. Evaluation helps understand what is working and not working in the implementation of policies and programmes.

Section 21 of the ILO **Recommendation No. 158** states that “*the structures of the national system of labour administration should be kept constantly under review, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers*”.

On its side, the **CEACR** has noted that the planned objectives of labour administration should be measurable or time-bound so that they can be evaluated against specific indicators to allow labour administrations to assess their results and be accountable for the achievement of the set goals<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, the **CEPA** strategy guidance note on monitoring and evaluation systems (February 2021)<sup>20</sup> provides practical guidance on how to strengthen national M&E systems in the context of sound policymaking.

Evaluation systems will be more effective if the plan is based on specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time-bound (**SMART**) **targets**, outcomes and indicators. Therefore, the quality of targets and

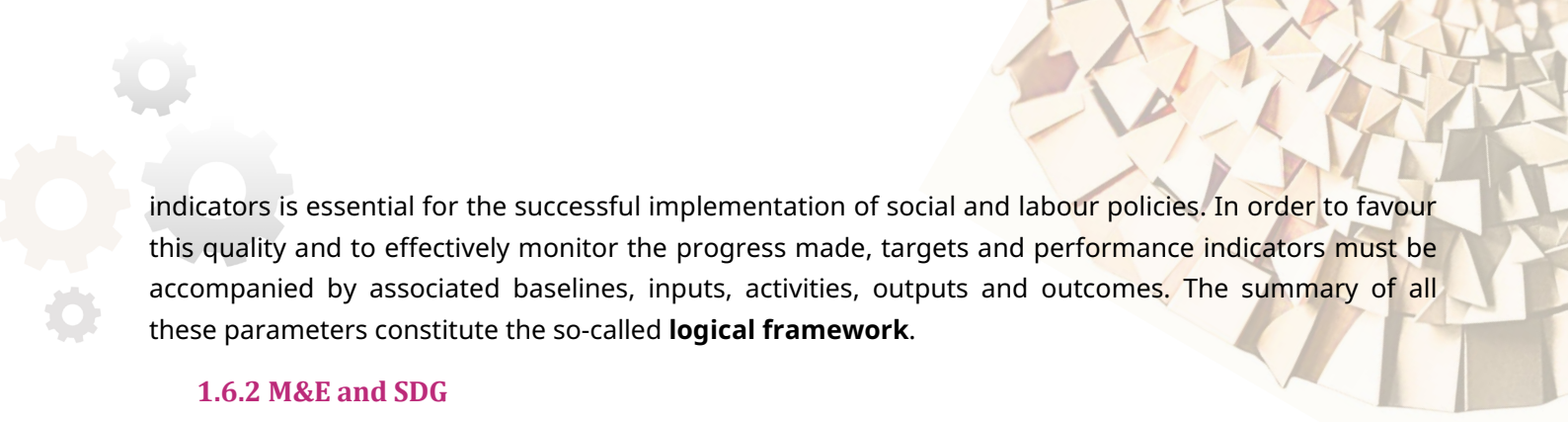
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<sup>17</sup> Public Governance Directorate Committee of Senior Budget OECD; *Medium-term and top-down budgeting in OECD countries*; 2023; page 5; available at [https://one.oecd.org/document/GOV/SBO\(2023\)10/REV1/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/GOV/SBO(2023)10/REV1/en/pdf)

<sup>18</sup> This part has been drafted drawing on the planning cycle referred to by Vági, P. and E. Rimkute (2018), “*Toolkit for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of public administration reform and sector strategies: Guidance for SIGMA partners*”, SIGMA Papers, No. 57, OECD Publishing, Paris, pages 11-12; available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/37e212e6-en>

<sup>19</sup> See the ILO report “*Labour administration in a changing world of work*”, pages 94 and following and paras 279 and following.

<sup>20</sup> <https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/publications/cepa-strategy-guidance-note-monitoring-and-evaluation-systems>



indicators is essential for the successful implementation of social and labour policies. In order to favour this quality and to effectively monitor the progress made, targets and performance indicators must be accompanied by associated baselines, inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. The summary of all these parameters constitute the so-called **logical framework**.

### 1.6.2 M&E and SDG

The evaluation should also assess the plan implementation in the light of its coherence with the **SDG indicators**. The 2030 Agenda states that the review of the SDGs will be “*rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations.*” It also calls for “*strengthening of national data systems and evaluation programmes*”<sup>21</sup>. There are no international standards or protocols for M&E systems but there are recognized **global good practices**. The so-called theory of change (ToC) is in this respect an increasingly common M&E tool, very used by United Nations, that illustrates the pathways that may lead to the desired change.

The **OECD defines monitoring** as a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of progress data on specified indicators. On the other hand, evaluation assessments ensure that the correct data will be gathered to enable good reporting on outputs and outcomes. This is called **Results-based management (RBM)**, which is a systematic way to gather data in relation to expected results for management and budgeting to inform management where changes are required<sup>22</sup>.

### 1.6.3 Contribution versus attribution

The discussion about M&E systems often turns to the **dilemma of contribution versus attribution** and the difficulties in awarding results to concrete and specific policy interventions. If we descend to practical examples, it is not easy, for instance, to discern if a reduction of accidents at work in the construction sector in a given time frame and country has been caused by a labour inspection campaign or by other factors that have effectively intervened (change in legislation, better training of workers, higher motivation of workers, less work stress due to good weather conditions, more financial resources and so on)<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, this means that any evaluation exercise should separate the chaff from the wheat and take into consideration a wide range of influencing factors and avoid the risk of falling into self-indulgence when the policy intervention has had only a relative impact on the achievement of results.

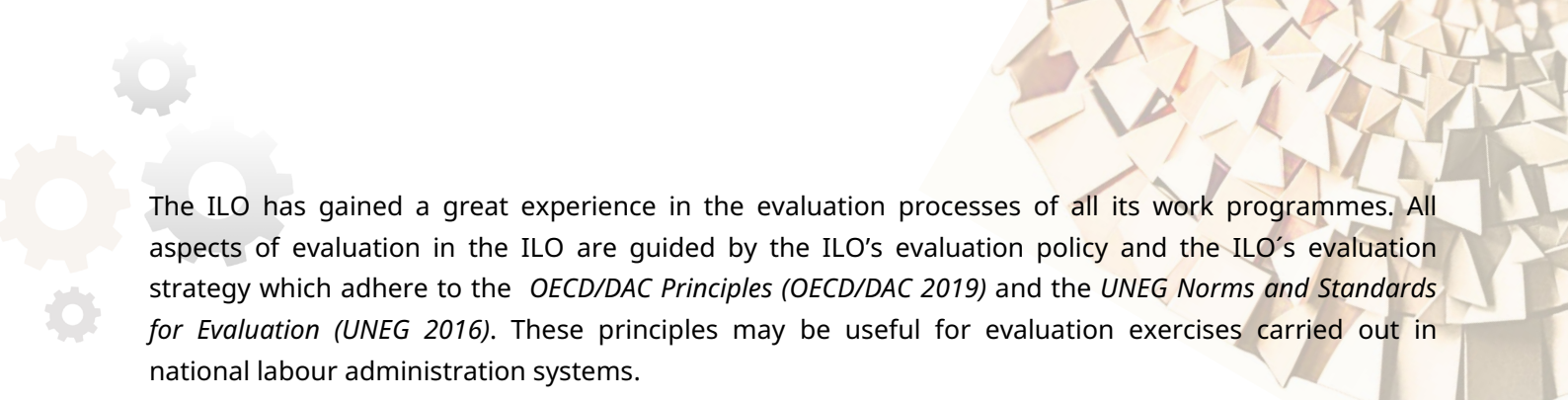
### 1.6.4 The guiding principles of evaluation in the ILO

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<sup>21</sup> United Nations, 2015, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/RES/70/1; available at [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

<sup>22</sup> World Bank, 2004, *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System*; available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/14926/296720PAPER0100steps.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>23</sup> See two studies about the factors intervening in accidents in construction sites: Sheikh Azim Ur Rashid, Bonaventura H W Hadikusumo, Md. Rakibul Islam Chowdhury: *What Are the Factors Influence on Construction Safety? A Review*; Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand; Journal of Civil Engineering and Construction, 2023 (211-222); page: 212; available online at: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/reader/2f5a9f05615ab3fe8081043d5b24a523281f77fb>  
F. Muñoz-La Rivera, J. Mora-Serrano, E. Oñate; *Factors Influencing Safety on Construction Projects (fSCPs): Types and Categories*; published in International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 1 October 2021; page 2; available online at <https://www.semanticscholar.org/reader/e7a68efc19041906012cf411a204059100a1429e>



The ILO has gained a great experience in the evaluation processes of all its work programmes. All aspects of evaluation in the ILO are guided by the ILO's evaluation policy and the ILO's evaluation strategy which adhere to the *OECD/DAC Principles (OECD/DAC 2019)* and the *UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (UNEG 2016)*. These principles may be useful for evaluation exercises carried out in national labour administration systems.

The evaluation function must always be objective and independent for the sake of external credibility. Evaluation is a key tool for providing support to labour administration management and for enabling the oversight of the functioning of the different ministerial departments.

The ILO principles for evaluation are:

- ▶ **Usefulness:** the selection, design and follow-up of evaluations aim to be useful, particularly to support decision-making;
- ▶ **Impartiality:** evaluation processes are established to minimize bias and protect impartiality at all stages of the evaluation, thereby supporting the credibility of the evaluation function and evaluation results; reports must present the evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations in a complete and balanced way;
- ▶ **Independence:** evaluators are selected with due regard to avoiding potential conflicts of interest;
- ▶ **Quality:** each evaluation should employ design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented, covering appropriate methodologies for data collection, analysis and interpretation;
- ▶ **Competence:** those engaged in designing, conducting and managing evaluation activities shall have all the necessary skills to conduct high-quality and ethical work as defined in the UN Evaluation Group's professional standards;
- ▶ **Transparency and consultation:** transparency and consultation with stakeholders are present in all stages of the evaluation process; this strengthens the credibility of the evaluation and facilitates ownership of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

### Takeaways

- ▶ *The ministerial budget is part of the general government's budget and is aimed at the implementation of the ministry's policy actions;*
- ▶ *The budget of labour administration is often the result of the discussions held between the ministry of labour and the ministry responsible for economic and financial affairs;*
- ▶ *In many countries, labour administration's budget and accounts are explained to the public, especially the main budget lines and changes in the budgetary allocations;*
- ▶ *The budgets pursue to implement the planned goals and to respond to major labour challenges;*
- ▶ *Sound and effective financial management is key for ensuring that scarce resources are properly used observing the principles of accountability to the tax payer and value for money;*
- ▶ *Gender-responsive budgeting is a growing practice in many countries and it is particularly applicable to labour administration;*
- ▶ *The budget of a ministry of labour is normally allocated by a general budget law that is drafted annually by the government and approved by the legislature;*
- ▶ *The usual budget time frame is the fiscal year, but it should cover longer periods;*
- ▶ *A key budget allocation is the one addressed to digitalisation and technological transformation;*
- ▶ *Most labour ministries have an internal audit unit, whose primary function is monitoring the*

ministry's expenses and checking if these are in line with the approved budgetary appropriations.

## **B. Human resources in labour administration. Recruitment, training, guiding and supervising employees to achieve organizational goals. Leadership, motivation, and communication within labour administration services.**

### **1.1 Overview and International standards regarding human resources in labour administration**

Article 10 of the **ILO Convention No. 150** lays down that the *staff of the labour administration system shall be composed of persons who are suitably qualified for the activities to which they are assigned, who have access to training necessary for such activities and who are independent of improper external influences. Such staff shall have the status, the material means and the financial resources necessary for the effective performance of their duties.*

The **ILO Recommendation on labour administration No. 158** (sections 22 and following), referring to the necessary resources and staff of labour administrations, states that *appropriate arrangements should be made to provide the system of labour administration with the necessary financial resources and an adequate number of suitably qualified staff to promote its effectiveness. In this connection, due account should be taken of:*

- a) *the importance of the duties to be performed;*
- b) *the material means placed at the disposal of the staff;*
- c) *the practical conditions under which the various functions must be carried out in order to be effective.*

From the text of both the Convention and the Recommendation can be drawn the conclusion that human resources of labour administration are essential for its adequate functioning and that the staff need to be sufficient, qualified and trained.



Despite this legal prescription, it is well known that many labour administration bodies would not be fully in compliance with the above-mentioned ILO standard as long as they often are under-resourced in terms of staff, both in developing and developed countries, although a significant gap remains between industrialized and developing countries.

The conclusions of the Resolution on labour administration and labour inspection adopted at the International Labour Conference 100th Session, Geneva, June 2011<sup>24</sup> pointed out that:

- The lack of resources constitutes a major obstacle to effective labour administration in many countries;
- In countries where available resources are at critically low levels, a substantial and sustained increase of resources is necessary;
- In all countries the focus should be on developing and retaining skilled human resources since no labour administration can work without specifically dedicated staff who are qualified and adequately trained and equipped;

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<sup>24</sup> See [https://www.ioe-emp.org/fileadmin/ioe\\_documents/publications/ILO\\_ILC/2016\\_ILC/EN/2015-11-30\\_C-296\\_2011\\_ILC\\_Conclusions\\_on\\_Labour\\_Inspection\\_Discussion.pdf](https://www.ioe-emp.org/fileadmin/ioe_documents/publications/ILO_ILC/2016_ILC/EN/2015-11-30_C-296_2011_ILC_Conclusions_on_Labour_Inspection_Discussion.pdf)

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- Labour inspection systems, particularly those in developing countries, face numerous challenges that are common to labour administrations as a whole, including the need for increased financial resources, more duly qualified inspectors, better equipment and better training, and improved recruitment procedures;
  - It is necessary to encourage adequate and effective use of human and financial resource allocation for labour administration and inspection services.

## 1.2 Human resources in labour administration: situation and management

### 1.2.1 Situation of human resources in labour administration

According to the parameters above explained, it is of paramount importance to ensure adequate human resources for an effective labour administration. As far as labour administration staff numbers is concerned, a specific ratio has not been internationally agreed, but there is an unrelenting general complaint about the staff reductions brought by budgetary constraints, particularly since the 2008 economic crisis.

The **general problem of understaffing** specially affects developing countries and has had a specific impact on the labour inspection service, in not a few cases being the subject of representations submitted under article 24 of the ILO Constitution. Understaffing has also affected developed countries, for specific national conditions of each country, especially tight financial policies, have had an impact on the staff of the ministries. The lack of an adequate or sufficient number of human resources in the labour administration jeopardizes its satisfactory functioning and brings in a negative bearing on the quality and quantity of the services delivered.

The understaffing problem may be aggravated if the provision of staff in labour administration depends on the action of other ministries. As mentioned in the report *Labour administration in a changing world of work*<sup>25</sup>), in many cases responsibility for the administration of the civil service staff falls within the competence of other ministries, such as the ministry of public administration.

### 1.2.2 Management of human resources

Most labour ministries avail of **specific units for managing human resources** and providing related administrative services such as recruitment and training of officials and staff budget management. The human resources unit may be a department or a directorate, on some occasions a deputy directorate, and is responsible for implementing the staff policies. These units ensure that the staff is consistent in number and qualifications with the needs of the ministry. The HR units also deal with the career planning and promotion of the ministry's staff and manage staff situations such as secondments, postings, transfers, retirements of officials, sickness leaves and so on

The HR units in particular are responsible for implementing the ministry's training plans for officials. They implement the career training policies and guidelines and assess the training needs of the staff. These units are also responsible for the staff performance management, including the development and follow up of staff performance appraisal systems. These appraisal systems will deserve special attention later on.

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<sup>25</sup> See Report in page 102



## 1.3 Recruitment and conditions of service

### 1.3.1 Recruitment

The convenience of assuring **stability of public officials** employed by labour administration is generally accepted by most countries. A great deal of public employees in labour administration are civil servants and in the worst-case scenario they have an indefinite labour contract, although there are examples of other types of contractual agreements, such as temporary or fixed-term contracts, in particular in those administrations where the recruitment system of civil servants does not work with the advisable effectiveness or flexibility.

As civil servants, their status, recruitment and conditions of service are regulated by the civil service legislation. Not all high-level officials are civil servants, as for instance the advisers working in the ministerial cabinets, who are generally appointed on the basis of personal trust and upon discretion of the minister or a high-ranking official of the ministry. Likewise, senior professional officers are appointed on the basis of their education and professional background and in some other countries these officials are recruited on the basis of personal trust, which does not contribute to a professionalized labour administration.

In some countries, labour administration may resort to **employment of labour staff** when the public service recruitment system is not capable to cover all the positions, especially those assigned to low qualified staff. These officials with a labour relation may undergo particularities related to the duration of their relationship, wage or mobility, which are specific to labour law. This practice usually ends up in sour disputes when, after a long time of service, labour employees claim to be reclassified as civil servants.

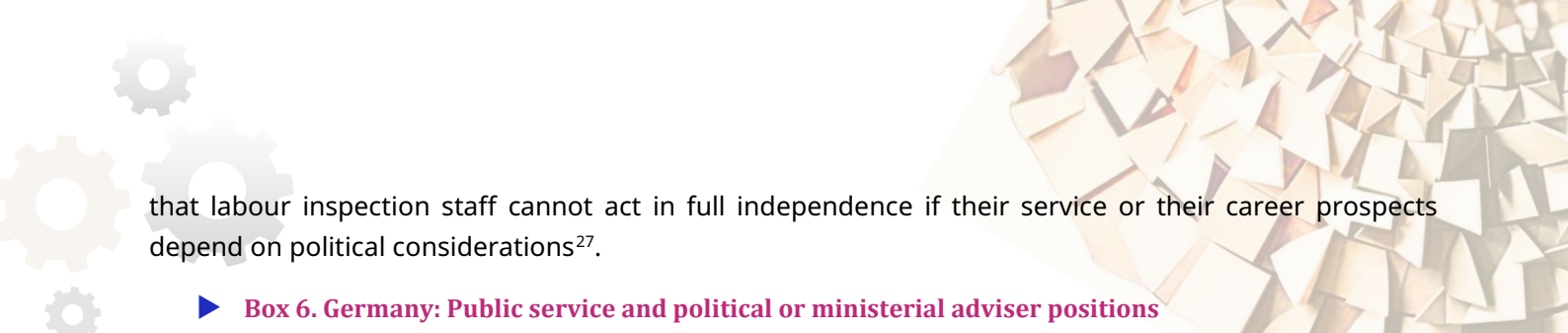
The recruitment process is usually regulated by specific administrative provisions and public employees are in general recruited either by open competition processes or, as mentioned above, hired by labour contracts, in both cases after assessment tests and interviews.

According to some studies on the subject, **politicization of senior appointments** is lower in organizations with agency status, higher organizational social capital, higher financial autonomy and more extensive use of management tools<sup>26</sup>. The level of politization of civil servants has fuelled endless discussions about whether or not the recruitment of senior civil servants on the basis of political decisions affect the work motivation of public employees and the level of competence and stability of public institutions.

As a matter of fact, the **politization of civil servants** would be in conflict with some international standards such as Article 10 of the ILO Convention No. 150, Article 6 of Convention No. 81 or Article 8(1) of Convention No. 129, the former one providing that labour administration staff must be independent from improper external influences and the two latter ones requiring labour inspectors to have the status of public officials. In this respect, in the *2006 General Survey on labour inspection* the CEACR noted

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<sup>26</sup> Bach, T., Hammerschmid, G., & Löffler, L. (2020); *More delegation, more political control? Politicization of senior-level appointments in 18 European countries*. Public Policy and Administration, 35(1), 3-23; available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/0952076718776356>



that labour inspection staff cannot act in full independence if their service or their career prospects depend on political considerations<sup>27</sup>.

► **Box 6. Germany: Public service and political or ministerial adviser positions**

Political or ministerial adviser positions in addition to the permanent public service do not exist in Germany. Even though senior civil servants are politically appointed, most of them are recruited from the civil service. In spite of that, it is common that senior civil servants have been working in public service positions close to politics (e.g., as a personal assistant to a minister or as head of a minister's office) or the chancellery for some time, or have been 'on leave' from their ministerial position in order to work for the parliament earlier in their career.

In federal ministries, senior civil servants in the two highest hierarchical ranks—administrative state secretaries and directors-general—are so-called 'political civil servants' (politische Beamte), that is, they serve at the request of their ministers and can be dismissed at any time without a specific reason given according to Federal Civil Service Law. Political civil servants can be found not only at the federal level, but also in the ministries at state level where usually only the administrative state secretaries have formal status as political civil servant<sup>28</sup>.

► **Box 7. Romania: a survey carried out in public administration**

A survey in Romania collected data between May and November 2023 and obtained 211 valid questionnaires. The study showed that appointments based on political criteria lower the work motivation of public employees and increase the level of incompetence and instability of public institutions. The most affected are public employees in management positions, those who have longer work experience in the public sector and those who work in public institutions that are part of central administration. Therefore, frequent changes based on political criteria lower the capacity of public institutions to respond to disruptive events by generating a loss of expertise, instability, and discontinuity in policy implementation. However, turbulent times require flexibility and adaptation to unexpected and unpredictable events, and political appointees might be in this case more responsive and cooperative<sup>29</sup>.

While it could be reasonable that a short number of high-ranked civil servants be appointed and/or fired on the basis of political trust and confidence, labour administration should not fall into a sort of experience mirrored by that historical sentence "*to the victor belongs the spoils*"<sup>30</sup>, which over time brewed the concept of "*spoils system*" as that in which a great deal of civil servants are dismissed and replaced after general elections resulting in a change of government. Therefore, a long and stable civil service career requires professionalization and also professional progression, steady and stable

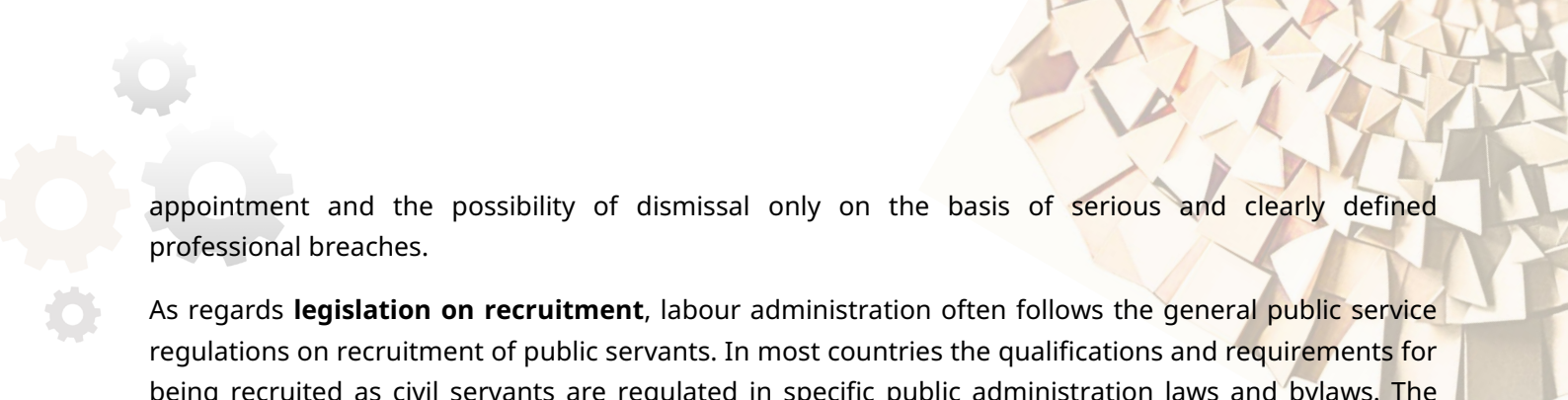
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<sup>27</sup> See report 202, page 67 at <https://www.ilo.org/resource/general-survey-reports-concerning-labour-inspection-conventions-and>

<sup>28</sup> Ebinger F, Veit S, Fromm N; *The partisan–professional dichotomy revisited: Politicization and decision-making of senior civil servants*. Public Admin. 2019; 97: 861–876 (page 865) available at <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12613>

<sup>29</sup> Liviu Radu and Bianca Veronica Radu *Politicization of Public Administration in Romania and its Consequences for Governance in Turbulent Times*; Journal Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, 2023; available at <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:266460288>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.stateoftheunionhistory.com/2018/09/1829-andrew-jackson-to-victor-belong.html>



appointment and the possibility of dismissal only on the basis of serious and clearly defined professional breaches.

As regards **legislation on recruitment**, labour administration often follows the general public service regulations on recruitment of public servants. In most countries the qualifications and requirements for being recruited as civil servants are regulated in specific public administration laws and bylaws. The qualifications, professional knowledge and background, work experience, and level of education may vary in accordance to the post offered and responsibilities required. National regulations usually require that **candidates** hold physical aptitude, citizenship, civil rights and absence of criminal records. **Experience** may also be required and the recruitment is subject to the selection procedures organized by the public administration's competent department in cooperation with the labour ministry. Candidates are in general requested to have completed **studies** (first or second cycle studies -with different credits- or master's degree, depending on the positions to be covered) on disciplines such as Law, Economics, Engineering, Natural Sciences or Social Sciences.

The candidates are generally requested to pass **competitive exams**, tests or interviews and the recruitment process is -or should be- public, fair and objective. More and more each day qualifications required do not only include technical skills but also the so-called **soft skills**, which are personal capabilities such as communication and listening abilities, interview strategy, report and writing capacity, aptitude to face anger and hostile situations and so on. These abilities, while being important in every facet of life, are increasingly required for the work of civil servants, in particular those who attend the public as, for instance, PES employees and labour inspectors.

Finally, the civil servants' legal corpus normally includes a **code of ethics** for civil servants, enshrining fundamental principles such as integrity, impartiality, confidentiality, prevention of conflict of interests, appropriate behaviour and so on

### 1.3.2 Conditions of service

The CEACR has indicated how the conditions of service of labour administration's civil servants should be in order to **ensure stability**, continuity, motivation and efficiency<sup>31</sup>, namely:

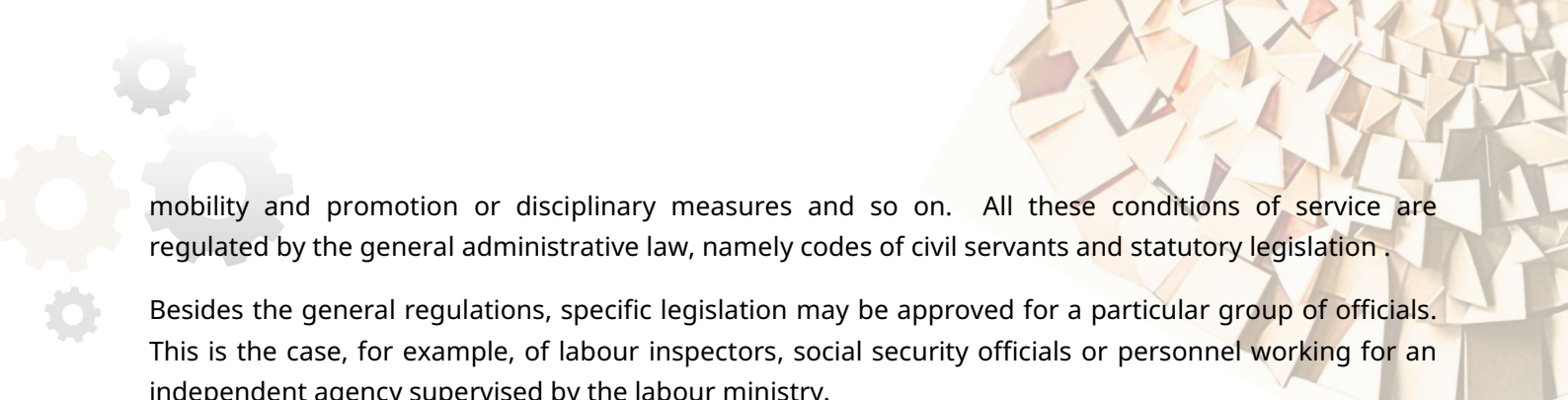
- ▶ Adequacy, taking into consideration the socio-economic conditions of the country;
- ▶ Commensurate with levels of responsibility;
- ▶ Comparable in pay as well as supporting resources to those of other public servants performing similar functions.

Ministerial internal regulations usually define the **structure of posts**, setting out categories of university or technological education, secondary and compulsory education, all grouped into different levels in accordance to the academic education and assigned tasks. In some countries labour administration approves a full job description, in which job profiles are defined in detail.

The **specific legislation** on labour administration does not regulate particular conditions of service concerning the working conditions of labour administration officials, but civil servant's general legislation applies to all labour administration officials with respect to rights, obligations, salary, liabilities and prohibitions, incompatibilities, permanent status, training, leaves, sick leaves, rewards,

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<sup>31</sup> See Report para 316 page 105



mobility and promotion or disciplinary measures and so on. All these conditions of service are regulated by the general administrative law, namely codes of civil servants and statutory legislation.

Besides the general regulations, specific legislation may be approved for a particular group of officials. This is the case, for example, of labour inspectors, social security officials or personnel working for an independent agency supervised by the labour ministry.

Perhaps the **wage** could be considered as one of the most sensitive condition of service. The wages of civil servants are generally defined in salary scales and complemented by specific allowances and incentives. The CEACR has sometimes noted that salaries of labour administration staff are inadequate for ensuring an effective discharge of their duties<sup>32</sup> and often barely adequate for meeting cost of living requirements. This is in part due to the fact that in many countries the labour ministry's budget has to be approved by the ministry of finance and the discussions on the salaries budget line often trigger lively controversies.

It is undoubted that poor salaries erode motivation and public service performance, jeopardizing the civil servant career and prompting an exodus of public employees to the private sectors, so wasting the investment and expenses already run for the training of civil servants, to say nothing about the inappropriate external influences that low paid public employees might be exposed to during the performance of their duties.

### 1.3.3 Performance appraisal systems

Special mention deserves the theme concerning the introduction of methods for **measuring and assessing the performance of public officials**. In general, administrative work is not easily measurable and the application of performance incentives systems to civil servants does not seem to be a clear issue so far. For instance, some **studies** have dealt with the performance incentives in relation to labour inspection and suggest that basing compensation merely on the number of inspections performed or on the amount of unpaid taxes collected results in inspectors focusing narrowly on their performance measures while neglecting those aspects of their work that remain unrewarded, not to mention the risk of discouraging cooperation between colleagues<sup>33</sup>. Other studies have pointed out that the adoption of performance management methods generally implies the introduction of incentive-based pay and rewards whereby an element of civil servants' total remuneration is placed 'at risk'<sup>34</sup>.

Withal the introduction of incentive-based rewards in public administration is **neither a simple task** nor is easy to measure administrative tasks and individual achievement against performance targets<sup>35</sup>. For

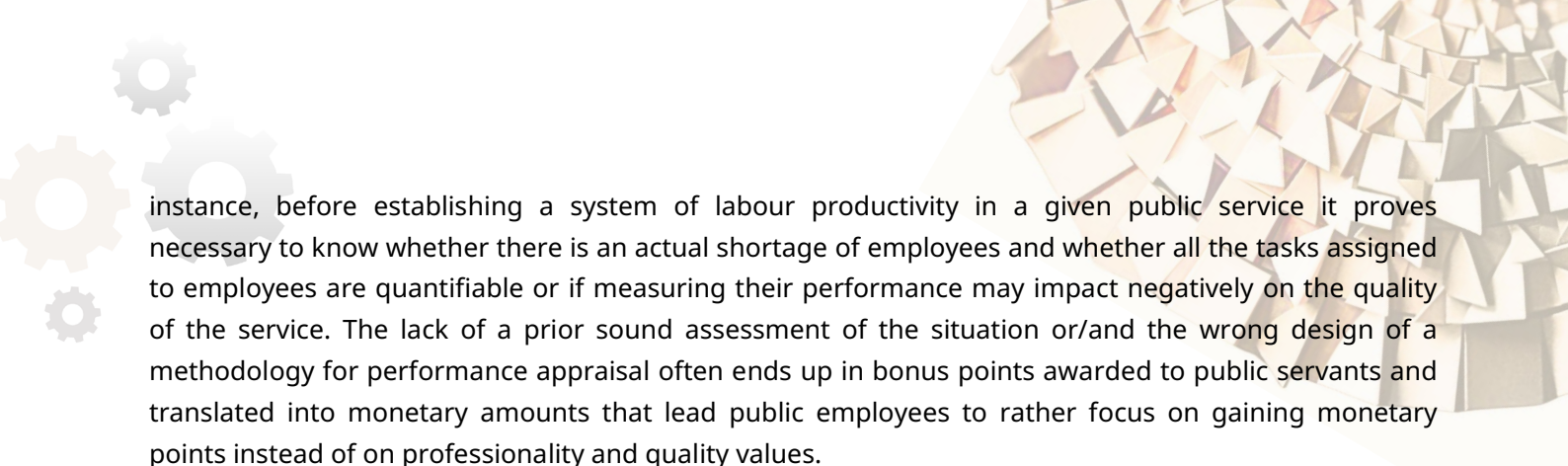
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<sup>32</sup> See the report *Labour administration in a changing world of work*; para 312, page 103.

<sup>33</sup> See *A study on labour inspectors' careers*; Arsenio Fernández Rodríguez; Page 55; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed\\_dialogue/%40lab\\_admin/documents/publication/wcms\\_739165.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_dialogue/%40lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_739165.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> Heyes, Jason: *Labour ministries and labour administration in transition : recent developments and future prospects* / International Labour Office, Labour Administration and Inspection Programme (LAB/ADMIN). - Geneva: ILO, 2011; WORKING DOCUMENT No. 16 - MAY 2011; pages 16-17; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_dialogue/@lab\\_admin/documents/publication/wcms\\_156034.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_156034.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Zorica Vukašinić Radojičić, Aleksandra Rabrenović, Safet Korać; *Performance appraisal of civil servants - comparative perspectives*; International scientific conference "archibald reiss days"; thematic conference proceedings of international significance; Belgrade, 2-3 October 2018; pages 61 and following; available at [https://www.academia.edu/89476645/Performance\\_Appraisal\\_of\\_Civil\\_Servants\\_comparative\\_perspectives](https://www.academia.edu/89476645/Performance_Appraisal_of_Civil_Servants_comparative_perspectives)



instance, before establishing a system of labour productivity in a given public service it proves necessary to know whether there is an actual shortage of employees and whether all the tasks assigned to employees are quantifiable or if measuring their performance may impact negatively on the quality of the service. The lack of a prior sound assessment of the situation or/and the wrong design of a methodology for performance appraisal often ends up in bonus points awarded to public servants and translated into monetary amounts that lead public employees to rather focus on gaining monetary points instead of on professionalism and quality values.

Although work objectives in public administration are often non-measurable, some **criteria** have been used so far. For instance, quality of work, meeting of deadlines or specific targets, observance of work duties, punctuality, accuracy and reliability, attitude to work, interest in professional training, methods of work, ability to work in teams. A modern vision of appraisal systems emphasizes the importance of setting objectives and targets that should be agreed between managers and public employees in order to enhance the motivation of the latter. Likewise, it has been said that a small number of scale performance categories (3 to 5) would be advisable<sup>36</sup>. At all events, a performance appraisal system for public employees should at least address the questions in the table below.

► **Box 8. Assessment for a performance appraisal system: prior questions**

- Is there a lack or an excess of human resources in your department?
- To which degree are public employees idle or overloaded?
- Have you in mind a neat difference between an incentive system and a work control system?
- What proportion of remuneration is convenient to be exposed to performance measurement and objectives attained?
- How performance is evaluated, what criteria should be used for appraisal and how objectivity would be safeguarded?
- Who is going to assess the performance results?
- What temporal basis should be taken into account, either annually, quarterly or monthly?
- Should be the performance appraisal system collectively agreed?
- Is there going to be a quotas system limiting the proportion of civil servants whose salary can be subject to appraisal system?
- Is there going to be a 360-degree methodology (assessment directed not only top-down, but bottom-up from employee to manager<sup>37</sup>)?
- Should a system for linking bonuses to team targets and team-building be set up?
- How leadership allowance will be calculated?

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<sup>36</sup> See Zorica Vukasinovic Radojicic et alia; page 67

<sup>37</sup> Zorica Vukašinović Radojičić, Aleksandra Rabrenović, Safet Korać; *Performance appraisal of civil servants - comparative perspectives*; International scientific conference “archibald reiss days”, thematic conference proceedings of international significance; Belgrade, 2-3 October 2018; pages 61 and following; available at [https://www.academia.edu/89476645/Performance\\_Appraisal\\_of\\_Civil\\_Servants\\_comparative\\_perspectives](https://www.academia.edu/89476645/Performance_Appraisal_of_Civil_Servants_comparative_perspectives)

- ▶ Is there going to be room for self-assessment?
- ▶ Are there any type of bonus for carrying out a particularly demanding task?
- ▶ How the performance appraisal will be comparable with other ministries or administrations?
- ▶ How subjective judgments will be avoided?
- ▶ How interconnection of tasks causing lower performance will be assessed?
- ▶ How quality and professionalism would negatively be affected?

As it can be easily deduced, placing a performance appraisal system in labour administration requires profound consideration and evaluation before its establishment. At this respect, the report *Labour administration in a changing world of work* echoes concerns expressed by the ITUC regarding the use of private management methods to evaluate the performance of labour administration services and staff. The organization indicates that evaluation in this context must be based on broad qualitative indicators, and it expresses doubts regarding the compatibility of private sector evaluation methods, focused on profit, with aims related to the public interest<sup>38</sup>.

### 1.3.4 Training of civil servants in labour administration

The **ILO Recommendation No. 158** states that:

- *The staff of the labour administration system should receive initial and further training at levels suitable for their work;*
- *There should be permanent arrangements to ensure that such training is available to them throughout their careers;*
- *Staff in particular services should have the special qualifications required for such services, ascertained in a manner determined by the appropriate body;*
- *Consideration should be given to supplementing national programmes and facilities for the training by international co-operation in the form of exchanges of experience and information and of common initial and further training programmes and facilities, particularly at the regional level.*

On the other hand, the **Resolution on labour administration and labour inspection adopted at the International Labour Conference 100th Session, Geneva, June 2011** concluded that it is necessary to promote, in cooperation with national governments, the exchange of best practices on transparent recruitment/selection processes, decent working conditions, security and protection, appropriate career development and training for labour administration officials and labour inspectors.

The training of labour administration staff is generally provided by central training institutes (Institute or School of Public Administration) or by the competent units within the ministry or department. Training programmes are adopted in many countries after **consultation with trade union** and are oriented towards different relevant ministry's areas such as thematic areas (employment, labour law and so on) or to cross-cutting issues (budget, human resources, management, gender equality, languages, etc.)

<sup>38</sup> See report para 314 page 104.

### ► **Box 9. Colombia: training in labour administration**

Training in the Ministry of Labour in Colombia hinges on thematic axes and the Institutional Training Plan – PIC, 2024- develops its training activities based on three types of knowledge:

- Essential: those that must be acquired by all persons who are linked to the public service, which can be offered and developed during the starting period;
- Specific: allow acquaintance with systems, methods, information technologies, techniques, tools and instruments used in public management;
- Specialised: let public servants to continuously improve their performance within the entity and are directly associated with the mission and translated into a set of products and expected results, services delivered by the administration, results and citizen satisfaction<sup>39</sup>.

### ► **Box 10. Periodical training of civil servants in Germany**

In Germany, some years ago the Federal Careers Ordinance introduced a requirement that in each ministry every staff member should be entitled to 12 days of further training per year. The labour and social affairs ministry developed a curriculum of compulsory units, to be completed within 5 years, and a suite of options<sup>40</sup>.

In general, labour administration, as many other sectors of public administration, organizes training of civil servants at two main levels: **initial training and permanent training**. Initial training is often synchronized with the probationary period and aims to acquaint newly recruited civil servants with the working environment and the relevant legal framework. Permanent training seeks to provide long-life capacity-building to civil servants and update them in administrative and legislative changes.

A new and increasingly area of training is the **digitalization of labour administration or digital skills**. The administrative management making use of big data or artificial intelligence represent a great challenge for all administrations and also for labour administration. This is where training becomes of utmost importance if labour administration seeks to stand the fast technological pace.

### ► **Box 11. Thailand: digital training; Bangkok, March 2024**

To bolster the digital proficiency of civil servants within the Department of Skill Development (DSD), the Ministry of Labour's Digital Skill Development Academy (DiSDA), a unit under the supervision of DSD, has successfully executed a project aimed at fostering and upgrading the quality of the workforce equipped with digital technology, marking a significant leap forward in the realm of professional development for civil servants.

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<sup>39</sup> Available at <https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/documents/20147/0/Plan+Institucional+de+Capacitaci%C3%B3n+2024-+V1.0.pdf/a7e4b6cb-bb7b-4701-b714-1d06995cdaec?t=1706737972166>

<sup>40</sup> Heyes, Jason; Labour ministries and labour administration in transition : recent developments and future prospects / Jason Heyes ; International Labour Office, Labour Administration and Inspection Programme (LAB/ADMIN). - Geneva: ILO, 2011; WORKING DOCUMENT No. 16 – MAY 2011; page 15; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_dialogue/@lab\\_admin/documents/publication/wcms\\_156034.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_156034.pdf)

Over 30 civil servants from the Department of Skill Development participated in the program and underwent comprehensive training and certification with the ICDL<sup>41</sup> international digital standards, focusing on the Application Essentials module and the Computer & Online Essentials module. The significance of this initiative also extends beyond individual digital skill development, whereby digitally proficient civil servants may integrate into the High-Performance and Potential System (HiPPS) Programme developed by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) to prepare Thai government officers with high performance to become an important part of the government sector.

As the digital landscape evolves, initiatives similar to DiSDA project serve as a testament to the nation's proactive stance in equipping its workforce with the relevant in-demand digital skills for success in driving societal progress and economic competitiveness. Empowering the workforce with internationally recognised digital skills certification will enhance individual career prospects and position Thailand as a frontrunner in the global digital economy<sup>42</sup>.

Digital transformation requires comprehensive and lifelong training programmes, plans and strategies covering the necessary skills required by the staff of labour administration. Likewise, managers ought to ensure that the labour administrations are well digitally equipped and the staff is motivated. The OECD Framework for Digital Talent and Skills in the Public Sector<sup>43</sup> has suggested a set of actions in order to guide governments in considering the skills and management aspects of digital transformation (see below).

► **Box 12. OECD: Framework for Digital Talent and Skills in the Public Sector**

Building the right environment for encouraging digital transformation requires leaders and their organisations to take some actions summarized below:


- Be aware of the digital skills that a workforce requires to keep pace with digital evolution;
- Communicate a clear and understandable vision of the role of digital and actively champion the benefits of digital government;
- Demonstrate their engagement by visibly endorsing and actively participating in the rhythm of digital delivery;
- Focus on digital professions that are user-centred;
- Follow a digital skills strategy for society as a whole ensuring all are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital age;
- Equip public servants with the digital user skills that support digital government maturity;

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<sup>41</sup> International Computer Driving Licence

<sup>42</sup> <https://icdl.org/ministry-of-labour-disda-initiative-to-enhance-digital-skills-for-civil-servants-in-the-department-of-skill-development-and-thai-workforce/>

<sup>43</sup> OECD *Working Papers on Public Governance* No. 45, June 2021; see page 8; available at [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-oecd-framework-for-digital-talent-and-skills-in-the-public-sector\\_4e7c3f58-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-oecd-framework-for-digital-talent-and-skills-in-the-public-sector_4e7c3f58-en.html)

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- ▶ Set up diverse and multidisciplinary teams consisting of well-trained digital and non-digital professionals;
  - ▶ Promote digital government user skills and actively shape the environment to create a digitally enabled state;
  - ▶ Invest in digital talents by offering regular feedback loops and mentoring programmes, and providing training in both formal and informal way.

#### 1.4 Leadership, communication and motivation within labour administration services

The keystones of an efficient management are leadership, communication and motivation. A good approach to these three features may make the labour administration system work fluidly and efficiently. These abilities, should they be so called, may be defined as follows:

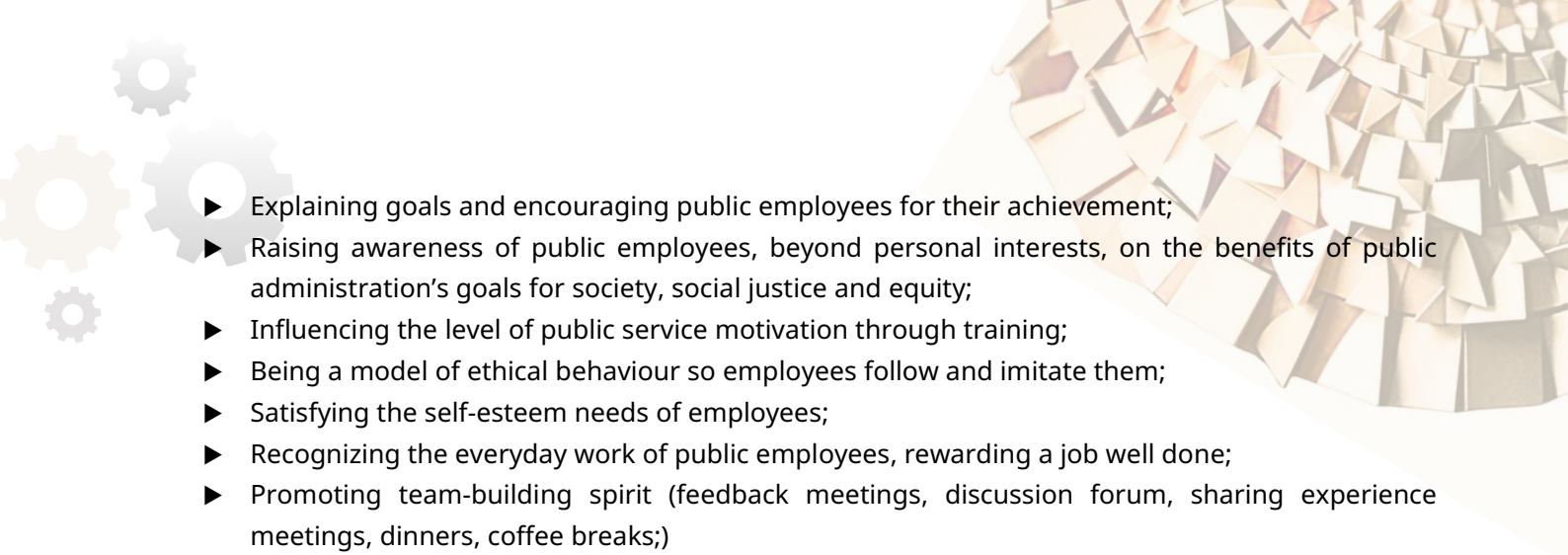
- **Leadership** entails organizing the public services in labour administration, allocating resources, assigning tasks to the staff and managing relationships among employees. Leaders must organize and define the labour roles and lines of management, ensuring that the service work with efficiency. They must make an adequate use of communication and interpersonal techniques and strike the balance between the employees' needs and the business demands.
- **Communication** is necessary for achieving effective and economical functioning of the whole system of labour administration. The quality of information exchanged among labour administration's different institutions has an impact on the accuracy of their decisions. Communication may take the form of *citizens communication* (in a democracy legal and moral obligation to publicly communicate its activity), *stakeholders communication* (developing relationships with groups directly interested in the activity of the public sector such as non-governmental organizations, professional associations, trade unions, employers' organizations, firms, etc), *internal and inter-institutional communication* (based on an efficient cooperation) and *crisis communication* (with citizens and other institutions in case of crisis or emergency for which public institutions must be prepared in advance<sup>44</sup>).
- **Motivation** in public administration is usually linked to job satisfaction and job performance. Motivation in public administration could be defined as an individual's disposition to respond to motives grounded in public institutions and has been linked to behaviours such as job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction or attraction to public service<sup>45</sup>.

Perhaps motivation is the result of a good management of the other two keystones: leadership and communication. In this context, motivation should be an attitude that leads to well-being at work and reveals trust in the leadership of the public organization. On the other hand, the very task of leadership is to build high levels of motivation among public employees and guide them towards the achieving of goals, for which communication plays a very valuable role. Leadership should attract and retain public employees by means of **some appealing techniques** such as:

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<sup>44</sup> This para following the study of Narcis Eduard Mitu: *Importance of Communication in Public Administration*; Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques • No. 69 • 2021: 134 – 145 ; pages 137 and following ; available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350996415\\_Importance\\_of\\_Communication\\_in\\_Public\\_Administration](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350996415_Importance_of_Communication_in_Public_Administration)

<sup>45</sup> Hameduddin, T., & Engbers, T. (2021). *Leadership and public service motivation: a systematic synthesis*. International Public Management Journal, 25(1), 86–119; pages 86-87; available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2021.1884150>

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- ▶ Explaining goals and encouraging public employees for their achievement;
  - ▶ Raising awareness of public employees, beyond personal interests, on the benefits of public administration's goals for society, social justice and equity;
  - ▶ Influencing the level of public service motivation through training;
  - ▶ Being a model of ethical behaviour so employees follow and imitate them;
  - ▶ Satisfying the self-esteem needs of employees;
  - ▶ Recognizing the everyday work of public employees, rewarding a job well done;
  - ▶ Promoting team-building spirit (feedback meetings, discussion forum, sharing experience meetings, dinners, coffee breaks;)
  - ▶ Fostering salary incentives (bonuses);
  - ▶ Ensuring a good work-life balance;
  - ▶ Promoting relationships with peers who share similar values and interests;
  - ▶ Opening communication channels between managers and employees, including mutual feedback.

▶ **Box 13. Labour inspection: Guidelines on general principles and factor of motivation**

The *Guidelines on general principles of labour inspection* provide some tips in relation to motivation:

4.1.11. Attractive career prospects are effective in retaining labour inspectors and improving their productivity.

4.1.12. Labour inspectors should be given the opportunity to play a managerial role at some point in his or her working life through internal competitions either involving the acquisition of new qualifications or passing examinations, but merit and seniority must also be taken into account.

4.1.13. Horizontal mobility, which involves doing a different job for the same authority or being seconded to another government department or body or to an international organization, can have a positive effect on inspectors' performance once they return to their previous post.

A further factor that has been claimed as having an effect on motivation, retention rates and performance quality is the mobility of civil servants. Horizontal mobility, which involves doing a different job for the same authority or being seconded to another government department or body or to an international organization, may have a positive effect on officials' performance once they return to their previous post<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> In relation to labour inspectors, see *A Study on Labour Inspectors' Careers*: International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2020, page 51; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed\\_dialogue/%40lab\\_admin/documents/publication/wcms\\_739165.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_dialogue/%40lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_739165.pdf)



## Takeaways

- ▶ *Human resources of labour administration are essential for its adequate functioning and must be sufficient, qualified and trained;*
- ▶ *The lack of an adequate or sufficient number of human resources in the labour administration jeopardizes its satisfactory functioning and has a negative impact on the quality and quantity of services delivered;*
- ▶ *The convenience of assuring stability of public officials employed by labour administration is generally accepted by most countries;*
- ▶ *The politization of civil servants would be in conflict with some international standards such as Article 10 of the ILO Convention No. 150 or Article 6 of Convention No. 81;*
- ▶ *The conditions of service of labour administration officials should be adequate, stable, commensurate with levels of responsibility and comparable (in pay and other conditions) to other public servants;*
- ▶ *The introduction of incentive-based rewards in public administration is not a simple task because it is not easy to measure administrative tasks and individual achievement against objectives-performance targets;*
- ▶ *An increasingly area of training is the one related to digitalization of labour administration and digital skills;*
- ▶ *Leadership plays a key role in motivating, attracting and retaining public employees.*



## C. Cohesive and comprehensive labour administration. Working with stakeholders. Synchronizing and harmonizing activities and resources to achieve common objectives.

### 1.1 International standards related to coordination in labour administration

▶▶ The **ILO Convention No. 150** and the **ILO Recommendation No. 158** state in their respective paras 1 b) that the *“term system of labour administration covers all public administration bodies responsible for and/or engaged in labour administration--whether they are ministerial departments or public agencies, including parastatal and regional or local agencies or any other form of decentralised administration --and any institutional framework for the co-ordination of the activities of such bodies and for consultation with and participation by employers and workers and their organisations”*.

After reading this legal provision, it should be gathered that coordination is a key element for the functioning of labour administrations and may be set up in three interconnected layers:

- ▶ Labour administration (both centralized and decentralized bodies and central and regional services);
- ▶ Parastatal labour administration (agencies, both at central and regional level);
- ▶ Any other institutions, in particular those participated by employers and workers and their organizations

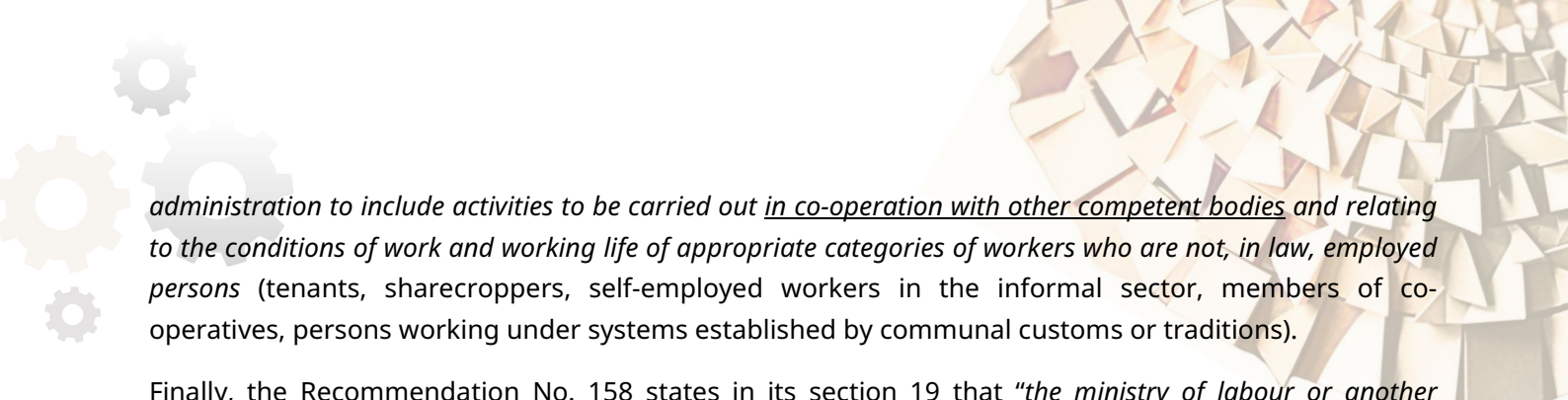
The sentence of the Convention *“responsible for and/or engaged in labour administration”* is very open and may include a complex and heterogenous group of bodies among which coordination might be established.

Moreover, Article 4 of Convention No. 150 and paragraph 4 of Recommendation No. 158 provide that Member States (which have ratified the Convention) *“shall, in a manner appropriate to national conditions, ensure the organization and effective operation in their territory of a system of labour administration, the functions and responsibilities of which are properly coordinated”*. In addition, Article 6 of the Convention states that the *“competent bodies within the system of labour administration shall be responsible for or contribute to (...) the coordination (...) of the national labour policy”*.

Therefore, both the Convention and the Recommendation refer to coordination in different passages of their texts, requiring it not only for organizing the effective operation of functions and responsibilities of labour administration, but also for the adoption of a national policy.

On the other hand, Article 9 of Convention No. 150 requires that, *“with a view to the proper co-ordination of the functions and responsibilities of the system of labour administration, in a manner determined by national laws or regulations, or national practice, a ministry of labour or another comparable body shall have the means to ascertain whether any parastatal agencies which may be responsible for particular labour administration activities, and any regional or local agencies to which particular labour administration activities may have been delegated, are operating in accordance with national laws and regulations and are adhering to the objectives assigned to them”*.

Moreover, Article 7 of Convention No. 150 lays down that, *with a view to meeting the needs of the largest possible number of workers, the countries shall promote the extension of the functions of labour*



administration to include activities to be carried out *in co-operation with other competent bodies and relating to the conditions of work and working life of appropriate categories of workers who are not, in law, employed persons* (tenants, sharecroppers, self-employed workers in the informal sector, members of co-operatives, persons working under systems established by communal customs or traditions).

Finally, the Recommendation No. 158 states in its section 19 that *"the ministry of labour or another comparable body determined by national laws or regulations, or national practice, should take or initiate measures ensuring appropriate representation of the system of labour administration in the administrative and consultative bodies in which information is collected, opinions are considered, decisions are prepared and taken and measures of implementation are devised with respect to social and economic policies"*.

ILO standards also refer to collaboration and cooperation in other areas of labour administration (Article 5 of **Convention No. 81** *---effective co-operation between the inspection services and other Government services and public or private institutions, collaboration between officials of the labour inspectorate and employers and workers or their organizations---*; Article 1.2 of **Convention No. 88** *---co-operation between employment services and other public and private bodies for ensuring its essential duties---*; or Article 4 *---"arrangements through advisory committees for the co-operation of representatives of employers and workers in the organization and operation of the employment service and in the development of employment service policy---*; or Article 6 *---co-operation in the administration of unemployment insurance and assistance to, as necessary, to other public and private bodies in social and economic planning calculated to ensure a favourable employment situation---*).

Thus, both the Convention and the Recommendation do not spare explicit references to coordination as a means for the general effective operation, for managing protection of all types of workers, for participating in consultative bodies and for collaborating with social partners.

## 1.2. A first approach: coordination as a result of coherence


At this point, after examining the provisions contained in the ILO standards, it turns up that **coordination is a result of the principle of coherence**. Labour administration, as any other sectoral administration, must be governed by the principle of coherence, seeking to mitigate contradictions or incompatibilities between policies. Coherent policy-making calls for the understanding of the links between economic, social and environmental fields. Coherence demands high doses of mainstreaming policies, coordination and harmonized planning. Without these, achieving a coherent policy remains a tough work.

The OECD<sup>47</sup> has set out different levels of public administration coherence:

- ▶ Horizontal coherence: between sectors in a given jurisdiction or cross-cutting issues in multiple sectors;
- ▶ Vertical coherence: between international level (agreements), national policies and local plans and actions;

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<sup>47</sup> OECD (Ebba Dohman, Senior Advisor, Policy Coherence for Development); *The importance of a policy coherence lens for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals*; page 39: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264264687-7-en.pdf?expires=1728452393&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=B4D1512C9DB3B15650827FD0D24D1DD4>

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- ▶ International: between different countries on a given policy domain, addressing transboundary spillover effects (for example, posting workers, migration issues).

Against this backdrop, **coordination is a key tool** for the good and coherent governance of labour matters and for achieving economic and social progress. Ministries of labour are the pivotal players for and have a central role in ensuring that coordination is efficiently organized across the whole system of labour administration.

- ▶ **Box 14. El Salvador: example of coordination and mainstreaming labour administration policies**

El Salvador's National Development, Social protection and Inclusion Plan 2014-2019 set out a gender-responsive approach to social protection encompassing four components: social assistance, social insurance, public services and infrastructure. The strategy was developed by the Secretariat for Planning (*Secretaría Técnica y de Planificación de la Presidencia*) in consultation with key stakeholders, including civil society and the national women's machinery.

The strategy makes use of sex disaggregated data to highlight gendered risks and vulnerabilities. It acknowledges life course risks (barriers to education and training, teenage pregnancy, maternity-related health risks, and old-age poverty). More importantly, it recognizes and pledges to address structural gender inequalities by: improving specialized services for survivors of gender-based violence; developing national care policies that reduce women's care burdens and guarantee the rights of care providers and care recipients; and improving women's access to pensions – particularly among those working informally<sup>48</sup>.

Coherence and coordination in the management of labour administration may also be understood with respect to the following parameters:

- ▶ intra-agency level;
- ▶ between goals, instruments and implementation (institutional coherence);
- ▶ between different international agreements (institutional interplay management);
- ▶ between donors and donor-partners (inter agency coherence for development cooperation)<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> Camilletti, E., Cookson, T.P., Nesbitt-Ahmed, Z., Sandoval, R., Staab, S. and Tabbush, C.: *Mainstreaming gender into social protection strategies and programmes: Evidence from 74 low- and middle-income countries*; UNICEF Innocenti and UN Women, New York; page 15; <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/5391/file/UNICEF-Mainstreaming-Gender-Social-Protection-Strategies-Programmes-2021.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA); *Strategy guidance note on promotion of coherent policymaking*; United Nations; Department of Economic Affairs; February 2021; page 3; available at <https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/publications/cepa-strategy-guidance-note-promotion-coherent-policymaking>



▶ **Box 15. Lithuania: National horizontal sustainable development principle (HSDP)**<sup>50</sup>

During last five years, Lithuania has established a national horizontal sustainable development principle (HSDP) that unites all the government institutions for better SDGs implementation and promotes policy coherence for sustainable development in the country. The Ministry of Environment acts as the main co-ordinating institution for sustainable development and has been appointed to serve as co-ordinating institution for HSDP.

The role of the Ministry of the Environment is to systematically co-ordinate the inclusion of the HSDP into national development programmes and progress measures as well as monitor progress indicators for the implementation of the HSDP, provide expert support to other ministries and promote inter institutional cooperation on the implementation of the HSDP.

Nonetheless, coordination and coherence management may face challenges, in particular from the perspective of agencies, such as blurred lines of accountability, loss of control, influence or independence or dilution of priorities, inter alia<sup>51</sup>. The lack of coordination and cross-cutting policies will lead to fragmentation, competing and incoherent objectives and inconsistency, which will unfortunately be commonplace in labour administration. On the contrary, joint decision-making will upgrade management, help finding synergies when setting goals and objectives and ease resolution of conflicts between institutions both at organizational or sectoral level.

### **1.3 Forms of coordination in labour administration**

Labour administration may turn to different actors involved in the design, development and implementation of social policies. As it was examined above, labour administration may seek coordination for different aims, at different levels and with different institutions.

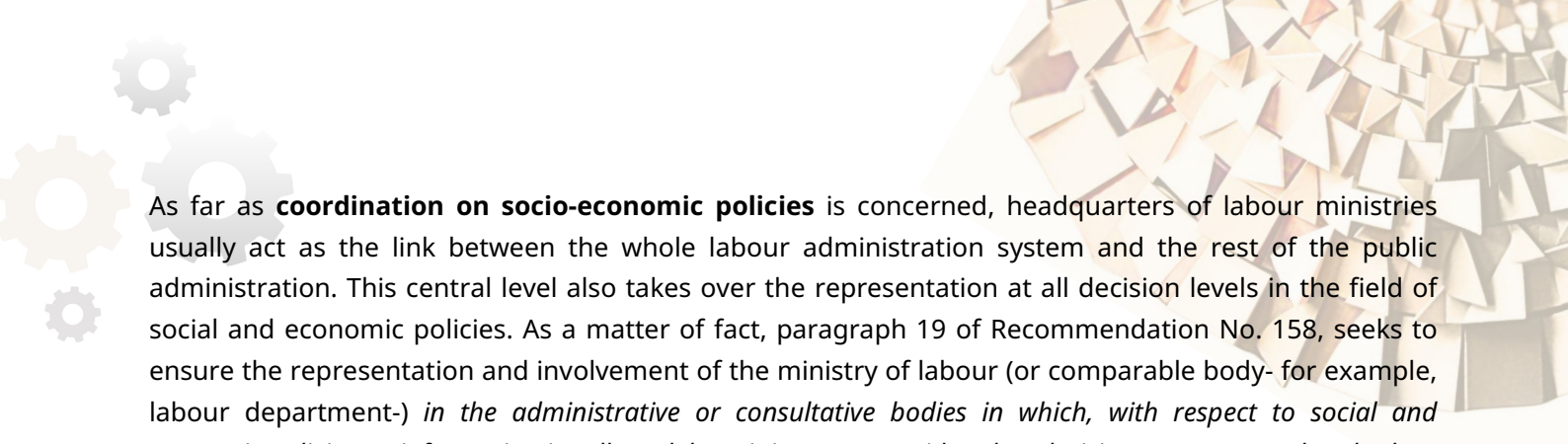
#### **1.3.1 Coordination for labour policy**

Labour administration comprises a wide range of matters and domains whose **responsibilities are often assigned to different bodies** which are responsible for specific aspects of labour policy. Therefore, coordination is not only related to the labour administration system itself but to the sphere of policy. Coordination and cooperation among institutions are key elements in the design and implementation of national labour policies and strategies. In some instances, two or more ministries may hold competencies in designing policies and strategies in different fields of labour administration. This situation requires inter-ministerial coordination and a joint strategy and plan of action, both to be arranged between different areas of social policy (labour, employment, health and safety at work) and between labour ministry and other ministries whose policies may be impacted by labour ministry programmes or vice versa. This is why these other ministries must be informed of the new policy proposals raised by the ministry of labour and be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

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<sup>50</sup>OECD (2024), *Unleashing Policy Coherence to Achieve the SDGs: An Assessment of Governance Mechanisms*, OECD Publishing, Paris, page 33; <https://doi.org/10.1787/a1c8dbf8-en>

<sup>51</sup>CEPA strategy guidance note on *Promotion of coherent policymaking*; February 2021; page 6.



As far as **coordination on socio-economic policies** is concerned, headquarters of labour ministries usually act as the link between the whole labour administration system and the rest of the public administration. This central level also takes over the representation at all decision levels in the field of social and economic policies. As a matter of fact, paragraph 19 of Recommendation No. 158, seeks to ensure the representation and involvement of the ministry of labour (or comparable body- for example, labour department-) *in the administrative or consultative bodies in which, with respect to social and economic policies, a) information is collected; b) opinions are considered; c) decisions are prepared and taken; and d) measures of implementation are devised.* This principle, harboured in the Recommendation, also encompasses the participation in tripartite bodies such as socio-economic councils or sectoral bodies, for these bodies play a key role in the design of social policies.

In other words, it is of outmost importance to coordinate social policies and avoid fragmentation in the policy-making process in a context of increasing complexity and interrelationship, where specialized departments and branches ever more spread across the public administration and governmental bodies.

### 1.3.2 Coordination for effective operations

An effective coordination ensures that the bodies responsible for or involved in labour administration **do not overlap their functions** and allows the rational and efficient distribution of the available resources. Coordination becomes even more critical where a **crisis situation** demands a joined-up action in order to face the consequences (climatic disasters, pandemics and so on) affecting different sectors and domains.

The areas of PES<sup>52</sup> and labour inspection are good **examples of inter-institutional operational cooperation**, which is often enacted by the signature of agreements and memoranda of understanding with bodies outside labour administration such as social partners, municipalities, sectoral Chambers (PES), NGOs or such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Finance, the judges and public prosecutors, the police or those bodies responsible for equality and gender-responsive polices (labour inspection), to mention but a few examples.

Finally, it has already been said that of special relevance is the always expected **cooperation** between the **ministry of labour** and the **ministry for economic and financial matters** since the latter often keeps the key for budgetary issues. In most countries, budgets available for labour administration and for employment policies to a great extent depend on the negotiations between labour and finance ministries.

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<sup>52</sup> *Technical note Improving Public Employment Services Through Partnerships with Non-Public Providers Synthesis of international experience and implications for Kosovo*; July 2019; available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/711601592884500778/pdf/Improving-Public-Employment-Services-Through-Partnerships-with-Non-Public-Providers-Synthesis-of-international-experience-and-implications-for-Kosovo-Technical-Note.pdf>;

See *Successful partnerships in delivering public employment services*; Analytical Paper; European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services; DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: (December 2013); available in the web as PDF.



► **Box 16. Republic of Korea: system of staff quotas**

In the Republic of Korea, the Government indicates that, since the number of complex tasks cannot be dealt with by a single ministry is increasing, a system of staff quotas has been designated for inter-ministerial collaboration with a view to eliminating “invisible walls” between ministries. According to this system, when a field of policy requires inter-ministerial cooperation, the responsible ministry can file a request for the secondment of staff from other relevant ministries<sup>53</sup>

### 1.3.3 Inter-institutional coordination

Coordination sometimes consists of mechanisms enabling the **participation of the ministry of labour in the management board of the agency** or requires playing a key role in the appointment of the management council members .

► **Box 17. Greece: Hellenic Labour Inspection independent agency (management council and governor)**

According to articles 110 and 115 of Law 4808/2021, the members of the Management Council are selected by an independent selection committee, composed of representatives of several public administration bodies, among which are representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Economic and Social Committee or the Education and Research Staff appointed by the Ministry of Labour.

The Selection Committee draws up a short list of prioritised candidates (two per position) and submits it to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, who selects the candidates, subject to the agreement of the Parliament’s Committee on Institutions and Transparency.

The Governor of the agency is selected following an open tender and according to the terms and conditions laid down by a decision of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. The candidates are selected in the same way as for the members of the Management Council.

A proposal is submitted to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, who finally proposes the candidate to the Committee of Institutions and Transparency of the Parliament for approval.

In many countries inter-institutional coordination has been traditionally established on an **informal or ad hoc basis**, but the general trend is to formalize it through a specific department or by means of **inter-ministerial or inter-agency agreements**. Inter-agency coordination is often formulated, as said above, through memoranda of understanding, collaboration or partnership agreements, service agreements, pacts or multi-lateral contracts.

► **Box 18. Burkina Faso: coordination in labour administration**<sup>54</sup>

In Burkina Faso, there is no single institutional structure established to coordinate the different bodies of the labour administration system. However, these bodies are organized around a general secretariat which coordinates the internal activities of each structure and provides guidance based on relevant labour policies.

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<sup>53</sup> See report “Labour administration in a changing world of work”, page 98 and para 294

<sup>54</sup> See ILO general survey *Labour Administration in a changing world of work*; page 95.

► **Box 19. Nigeria: Memorandum of understanding between Labour Ministry and Ossap; signature of a MOU on Vocational Jobs (23 June 2024<sup>55</sup>)**

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment has formally signed in 2024 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Technical, Vocational, and Entrepreneurship Skills (OSSAP-TVEE). This agreement addresses unemployment challenges and seeks to foster skill development

The collaboration, which is part of the federal government's initiative known as the Labour Employment and Empowerment Programme (LEEP), aimed to create sustainable job opportunities for Nigerians, especially youth and women. With a focus on vocational, technical, and entrepreneurial skills, the LEEP seeks to lay the groundwork for the annual creation of 2.5 million jobs.

Coordinated actions can also be organized by means of **internal guidelines** of a given ministry. These guidelines pursue the adoption and implementation of uniform legal initiatives and consistent policies that take into account the different bodies and institutions that play a role in a given area of labour administration.

► **Box 20. Belgium: an example of good results in inter-institutional coordination**

The problem

The problem was that social security institutions were not very customer-oriented and were not harmonized (different paper forms, different instructions, different information sources depending on the concrete risk, requesting the insured persons data already kept in another social security body, obligation to inform several institutions of the same facts, lack of automatic granting of rights on the basis of one single declaration)

The creation of the Crossroads Bank Social Security (CBSS) and its mission

To solve the above-mentioned problems, the CBSS was created 33 years ago. The mission of the CBSS is:

- To be the motor of e-government in the social sector;
- To stimulate and to support the actors in the Belgian social sector;
- To grant more effective and efficient services with a minimum of administrative formalities and costs;
- To allow Belgian social sector benefit from the new technologies;
- To improve and re-organize mutual relationships and processes;
- To promote the information security and the privacy protection so all the involved institutions and people can have justified confidence in the system;
- To deliver integrated statistical information to the politicians and the researchers in order to support the social policy

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<sup>55</sup> News release at <https://allafrica.com/stories/202406240343.html>

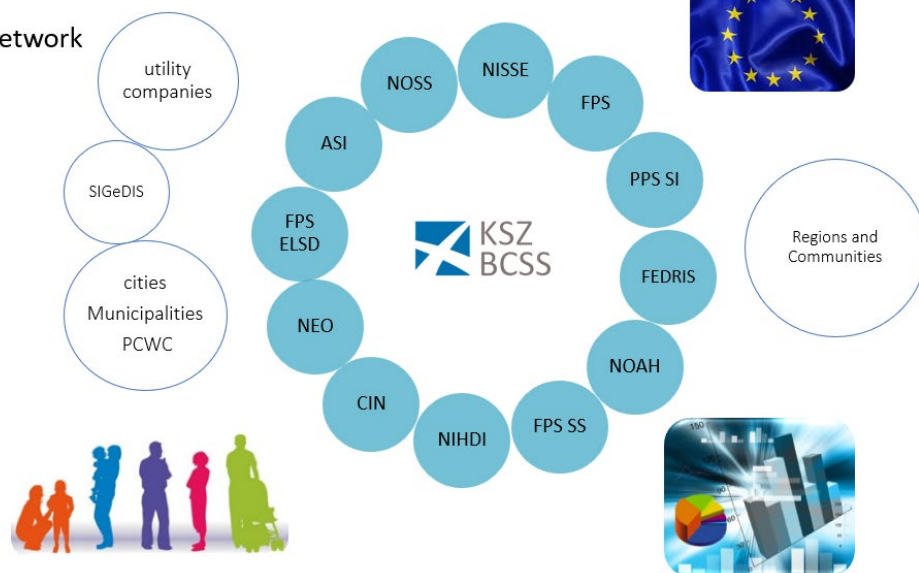
## Actual results

- ▶ A network between 3 000 social sector actors with basic services;
- ▶ Unique identification of the citizens;
- ▶ Rationalization, unique collection and re-use of information;
- ▶ 220 structured messages and about 120 web services in production after process optimisation and authorisations from the Information Security Committee;
- ▶ Abolition of almost all direct and indirect information exchanges on paper;
- ▶ More effective fight against fraud;
- ▶ > 1.8 billion messages exchanged between the actors in the sector in 2023;
- ▶ Unique identification of the companies;
- ▶ Automatic granting of additional rights;
- ▶ Multifunctional declarations from employers to the whole social security sector from application to application including wage and working time data;
- ▶ Common data centre, shared and integrated services, cloud-environment;
- ▶ Annual savings of € 1 billion in administrative burden for the social sector<sup>56</sup>


Figure CBSS

## Network with basic services

- functional network



<sup>56</sup> Information drawn from <https://www.ksz-bcss.fgov.be/fr/information-in-english#more-information>



Finally, inter-institutional coordination may be established in a **vertical direction**, which means that communication flows between officials of different rank. For instance, when instructions are issued by decision makers to labour administration officials.

### 1.3.4 Coordination in decentralized systems

Coordination is all the more necessary **if labour administration services are decentralized**. It is a very useful tool in those federal countries where the labour administration portfolio is shared with other federal entities. Of particular interest is how and whom labour administration may coordinate with in decentralized systems, where are different levels of competencies, namely federal and state level. In general, while the federal level retains core functions (labour legislation, occupational health minimum standards, social security) sub-national bodies or state-level bodies are delegated to deliver other labour administration services. Somehow, where a national policy, strategy or action plan at national level are to be implemented, they are agreed at state level. This means that there is a need of coordination between federal and state-level.

#### ► Box 21. India: the e-Shram system

In India, the system *e-Shram* was adopted in 2023. This system enables the sharing of data between the State Governments and Central Ministries for monitoring and targeted delivery of social security schemes. The Ministry of Labour & Employment launched *e-Shram*, a portal addressed to create a comprehensive National database of unorganised/migrant workers. The registration on *e-Shram* is made on a self-declaration basis for all the unorganised/migrant workers of the country. In order to facilitate benefit of social security schemes or employment opportunities to the *e-Shram* registrants, *e-Shram* portal is integrated with Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM) portal and the National Career Service (NCS) Portal<sup>57</sup>. administrations.

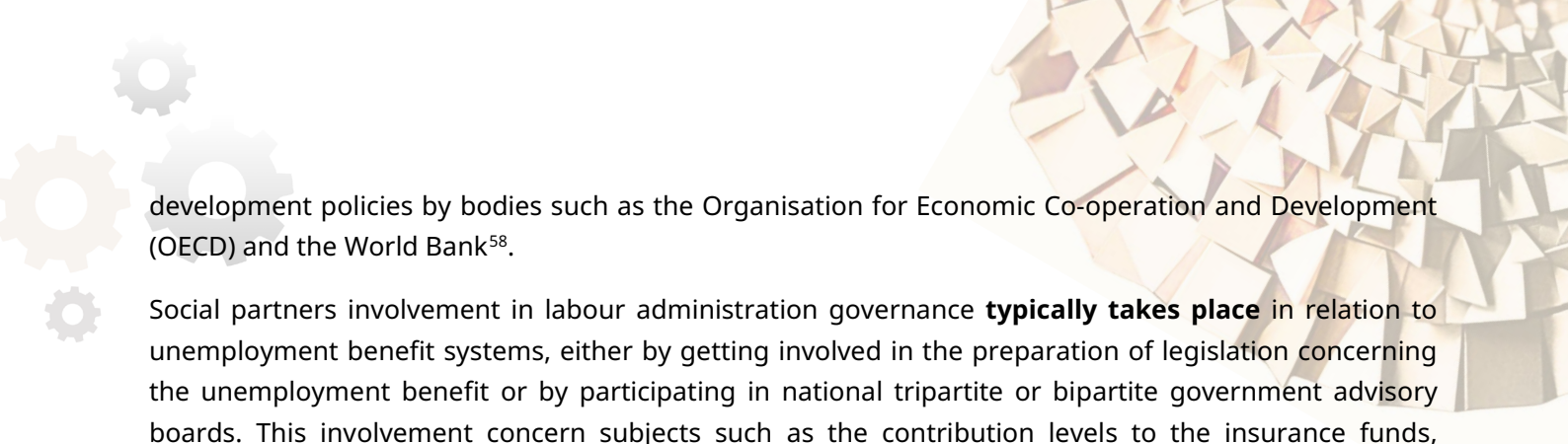
### 1.3.5 Coordination with social partners and other stakeholders

The involvement of employers' organizations and trade unions in labour administration varies from one country to another. It generally entails **advisory functions** in bipartite or tripartite consultative bodies or councils, although it sometimes involves management functions. Trade unions and employers' organizations also indirectly participate in labour administration **governance** through the national-level social dialogue which merges both sides of the world of work into de national governmental policies (for example, for agreeing on minimum wage, social protection and pensions, ALMP policies, labour law initiatives and so on).

In many countries social dialogue also takes place at the local level, which involves local public authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, and other stakeholders. According to the ILO, this the is the result of factors linked to globalization and the changing organization of production systems, the decentralization of industrial relations systems, and the strengthening of local economic

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<sup>57</sup> Information available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1909993>



development policies by bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank<sup>58</sup>.

Social partners involvement in labour administration governance **typically takes place** in relation to unemployment benefit systems, either by getting involved in the preparation of legislation concerning the unemployment benefit or by participating in national tripartite or bipartite government advisory boards. This involvement concern subjects such as the contribution levels to the insurance funds, pension eligibility criteria or the amount and duration of benefits (for example, countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden have an important role in managing and administering unemployment funds<sup>59</sup>).

The participation of social partners in the labour administration governance always depends on the **political and social trends** of each country, whereas social-democrat political governments have in general tended to preserve permanent social dialogue institutions more than conservative or liberal political options, though this pattern is not always true. The **2008 financial crisis** also damped the situation and made that social partners' participation in the governance of labour administration drew to a close in many countries<sup>60</sup>. Amidst this backdrop, social partners have in general retained only an advisory role at the national level as members of the social and economic councils whose recommendations are non-binding for the government<sup>61</sup>. Nonetheless, participation of social partners in labour administration has been historically relevant in a few countries such as, for instance, Germany or UK<sup>62</sup>, where social partners have a relevant participation in some governing bodies of labour administration on a bipartite or tripartite basis.

► **Box 22. UK: ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service), independent public body managed by social partners**<sup>63</sup>

ACAS is an independent public body that receives funding from the government. It provides free and impartial advice to employers, employees and their representatives on employment rights, best practice and policies resolving workplace conflict.

ACAS is a non-departmental public body of the Department for Business and Trade, which provides most of its funding. The ACAS Council is composed of members who are experts on a given subject (employer, trade union and independent members) and are appointed by the Secretary of State for Business and Trade.

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<sup>58</sup> ILO ILC 107th Conference, session 2018, Report VI, *Social dialogue and tripartism: A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social dialogue and tripartism, under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, page 14.

<sup>59</sup> European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions; *Social partners and social security systems*; page 4, available at

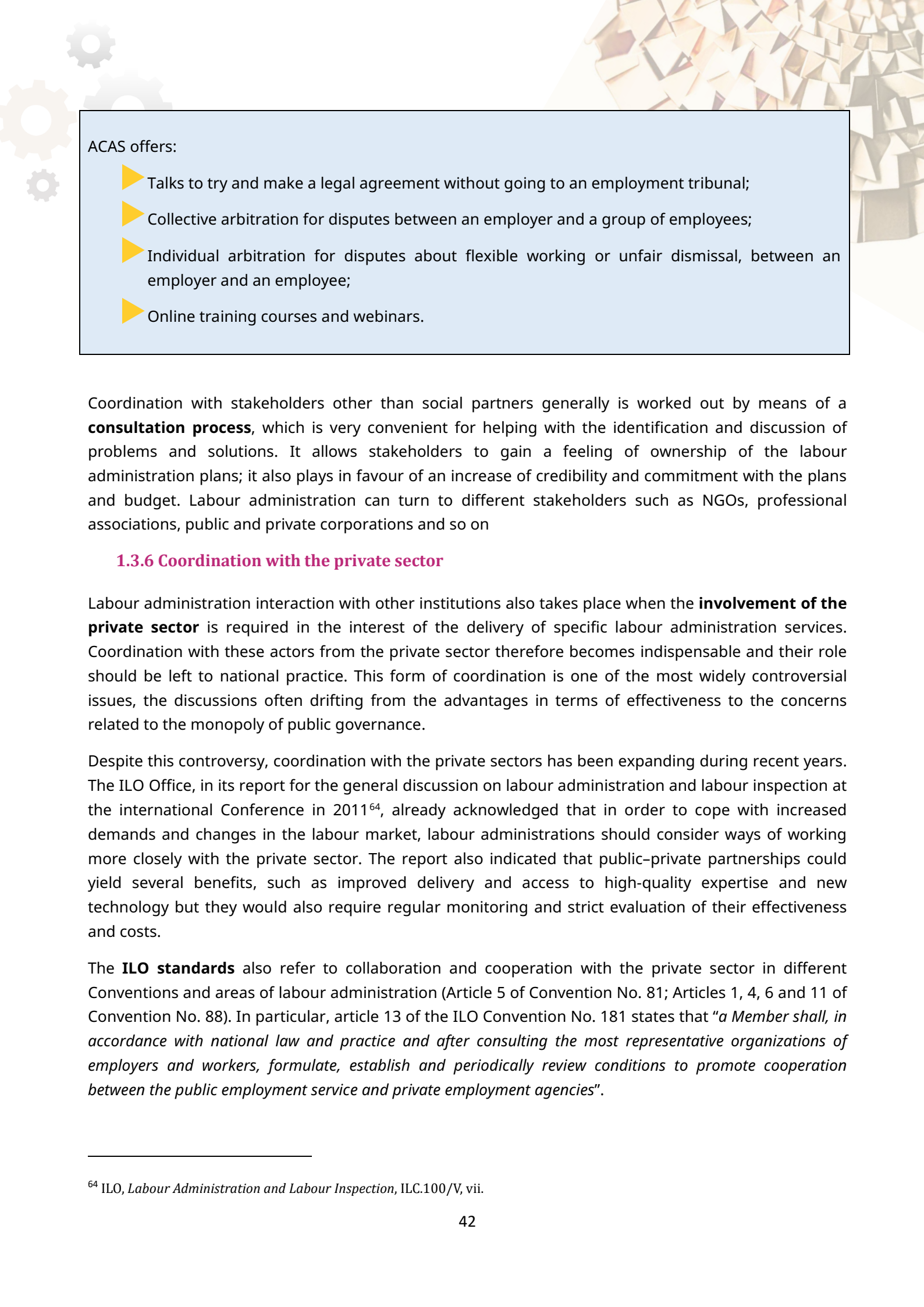
<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/system/files/2016-06/ef06104en.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Gavris M, Heyes J. *Varieties of labour administration in Europe and the consequences of the Great Recession*. Economic and Industrial Democracy. July 2019; page 17; available at <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/146367/2/Varieties%20of%20Labour%20Administration%20White%20Rose%20version.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> See *Varieties of labour administration* (...); page 12

<sup>62</sup> See *Labour ministries and labour administration in transition: recent developments and future prospects*; LAB / ADMIN working document No. 16 – MAY-2011; pages 21 and following; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_dialogue/@lab\\_admin/documents/publication/wcms\\_156034.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_156034.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> See <https://www.acas.org.uk/about-us>



ACAS offers:

- ▶ Talks to try and make a legal agreement without going to an employment tribunal;
- ▶ Collective arbitration for disputes between an employer and a group of employees;
- ▶ Individual arbitration for disputes about flexible working or unfair dismissal, between an employer and an employee;
- ▶ Online training courses and webinars.

Coordination with stakeholders other than social partners generally is worked out by means of a **consultation process**, which is very convenient for helping with the identification and discussion of problems and solutions. It allows stakeholders to gain a feeling of ownership of the labour administration plans; it also plays in favour of an increase of credibility and commitment with the plans and budget. Labour administration can turn to different stakeholders such as NGOs, professional associations, public and private corporations and so on

### 1.3.6 Coordination with the private sector


Labour administration interaction with other institutions also takes place when the **involvement of the private sector** is required in the interest of the delivery of specific labour administration services. Coordination with these actors from the private sector therefore becomes indispensable and their role should be left to national practice. This form of coordination is one of the most widely controversial issues, the discussions often drifting from the advantages in terms of effectiveness to the concerns related to the monopoly of public governance.

Despite this controversy, coordination with the private sectors has been expanding during recent years. The ILO Office, in its report for the general discussion on labour administration and labour inspection at the international Conference in 2011<sup>64</sup>, already acknowledged that in order to cope with increased demands and changes in the labour market, labour administrations should consider ways of working more closely with the private sector. The report also indicated that public-private partnerships could yield several benefits, such as improved delivery and access to high-quality expertise and new technology but they would also require regular monitoring and strict evaluation of their effectiveness and costs.

The **ILO standards** also refer to collaboration and cooperation with the private sector in different Conventions and areas of labour administration (Article 5 of Convention No. 81; Articles 1, 4, 6 and 11 of Convention No. 88). In particular, article 13 of the ILO Convention No. 181 states that *"a Member shall, in accordance with national law and practice and after consulting the most representative organizations of employers and workers, formulate, establish and periodically review conditions to promote cooperation between the public employment service and private employment agencies"*.

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<sup>64</sup> ILO, *Labour Administration and Labour Inspection*, ILC.100/V, vii.



The **ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work** also highlighted that, with careful design, private governance can play a positive role in contributing to the reinforcement of public governance institutions and outcomes<sup>65</sup>. Finally, the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** also calls for an enhanced global partnership bringing together governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors<sup>66</sup>.

#### 1.4 Coordination as a mechanism oriented to the achievement of SDGs

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, includes a target (17.4) and a composite indicator (17.14.1) of the Sustainable Development Goal 17 (*“Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”*). The target related to this goal is to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development. The indicator (number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development) covers eight progress measures with each scored on a 0 to 10-point scale:

1. Institutionalized political commitment;
2. Long-term considerations;
3. **Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination;**
4. Participatory processes;
5. Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, **assessment of policy effects and linkages;**
6. **Consultation and coordination across government levels;**
7. Monitoring and **reporting for policy coherence;**
8. Financial resources and tools.

As it can be seen above in bold, policy coherence requires **specific actions** such as inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination, reporting for coherence, assessment of policy linkages and consultation within the government levels. Policy coherence may be operated through different means, such as setting up high-level interagency committees, mapping out synergies during the planning development, establishing permanent cooperation channels with other bodies, reaching agreements or signing memorandum of understanding, organizing coordination meetings, issuing joint policy or framework documents or carrying out consultation with involved stakeholders.

For its part, **the OECD has built blocks of policy coherence** for sustainable development in the *Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD)*<sup>67</sup>, namely:

1. Building a strong, inclusive political commitment and leadership;
2. Defining and implementing a strategic long-term vision on policy coherence;

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<sup>65</sup> ILO, *Inception Report for the Global Commission on the Future of Work*, 2017, 41; available at [https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_591502.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_591502.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> UN General Assembly, resolution 70/1, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/RES/70/1 (2015), para. 39; available at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> OECD, *Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development*, OECD/LEGAL/0381; available at <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/260/260.en.pdf>

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3. Incorporating sustainable development into policies and **capitalize on synergies** and benefits across economic, social and environmental policy areas as well as between domestic and internationally-recognized SDGs.
  4. Setting up effective and inclusive institutional mechanisms to address **policy interactions across sectors** and **align actions among levels of government**;
  5. Ensuring **whole-of-government** coordination;
  6. Engaging appropriately sub-national levels of government promoting **coordinated actions** and enhancing **coherence across levels of governments** for sustainable development;
  7. **Engaging stakeholders** effectively to sustain broader support for PCSD and its implementation;
  8. Developing responses and tools to anticipate, assess and address domestic, **transboundary and long-term impacts of policies** to advance SDGs;
  9. Assessing **policy and financing impacts** to inform decision-making, with a view to increasing positive impacts and avoiding potential negative impacts on the sustainable development;
  10. Strengthening monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems to collect qualitative and quantitative evidence on the impact of policies and financing, and report progress on PCSD;

The words in bold call for different types of coordination actions and represent essential drivers for **improving policy coherence in pursuing the SDGs**, namely:


- ▶ Addressing **policy interactions across sectors**;
- ▶ **Aligning actions** among levels of government;
- ▶ Ensuring **whole-of-government coordination**;
- ▶ Promoting **coordinated actions** and enhancing coherence across levels of governments;
- ▶ Engaging **stakeholders** to support PCSD;
- ▶ **Assessing transboundary, policy and financing impacts**.

In this respect, the **level of policy coherence** must be assessed in the light of several criteria such as unified strategy, degree of shared priorities, level of policy consensus, frequency of consultation among ministries, exchange of information among ministries, speaking with one voice, among others.

### 1.5 The joined-up government approach

Coherent management and coordination are even more relevant in an **environment of globalization** and an increasingly complex world. Coordination has been linked with the so-called joined-up government approach. The term was first coined by UK's PM Tony Blair in 1997 and represented a modern trend in UK's government at that moment. Joined-up government brought changes such as shifting vertical public administration manner into horizontal coordination between departments. The term, also expressed as Whole-of-Government Approach ("WGA"), depicts a landscape where the diverse ministries, public administrations and public agencies carry out joint activities in order to provide common solutions to shared problems or issues and to this end involve cross-boundary work.

The United Nations has referred to the subject on several occasions. For instance, in the Political Declaration during the General Assembly of 2019 ("*Gearing up for a decade of Action*"), the Heads of States declared that "*we will strive to equip domestic institutions to better address interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs between the goals and targets through a **whole of-government approach** that can bring*



about transformative change in governance and public policy and ensure policy coherence for sustainable development”<sup>68</sup>.

### 1.6 The problems detected by the CEACR in relation to coordination

The CEACR has noted that ILO labour administration audits have regularly identified cases of strong “**departmentalization**” even within one ministry when units with interconnected tasks do not cooperate, do not exchange data, do not consult on their legislative drafts or do not share existing human and material resources just because they implement different laws, because of lack of appropriate governance mechanisms or as a result of a too formal administrative culture which does not promote horizontal cooperation. In its supervision of Convention No. 150, the Committee has emphasized the importance for labour administration to supervise whether any parastatal, regional or local agencies, responsible for particular labour administration activities, are operating in accordance with national laws and regulations and are adhering to the objectives assigned to them, in accordance with Article 9 of the Convention. The Committee has several times highlighted the importance of coordination and policy coherence for an effective operation of the system of labour administration in accordance with Article 4 of the Convention. It has also recalled the importance of ensuring that strategic objectives leading the work of labour administrations are coordinated among the different labour administration’s services<sup>69</sup>.

### 1.7 Coordination through interoperability and data sharing in public administration

Right decisions, coordinated actions and leveraging synergies require good quality information and easy access to reliable and accurate data sources. Technology advances and investments tend to improve data storage and data interoperability, certainly valuable tools among policy makers for developing policies and strategies. In this respect, the necessary advancement of the UN SDGs towards 2030 calls for data sharing in order to promote sound policymaking and effective governance. Interoperability and data sharing are **necessary to accelerate administrative procedures**, to avoid duplication of administrative steps or requesting documents to citizens when those are already stored in the administration.

#### ► Box 23. Italy: the “caporalato” strategy

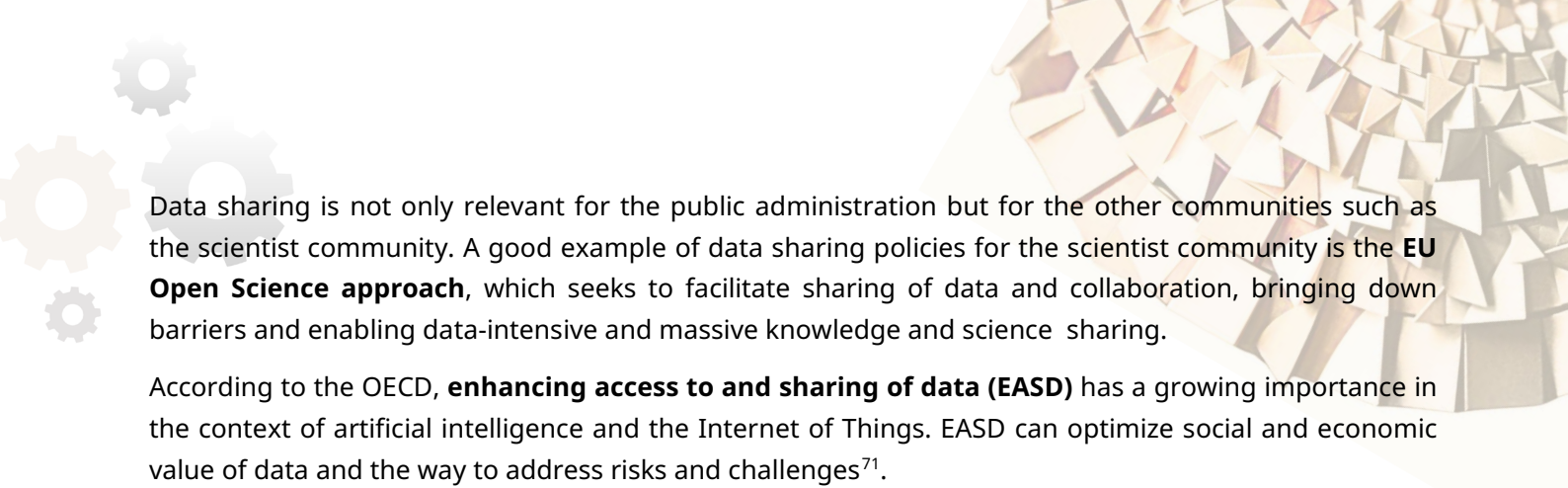
In Italy a new strategy was put in place. With a view to combating the so-called “*caporalato*” (labour exploitation and illegal gang-master employment system), a new action has been deployed to develop an information exchange system between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (labour relations and labour market data), the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry (data from the register of agricultural enterprises) and the Ministry of the Interior (data on residence permits)<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> Para 27 (d) of the Political Declaration at the UN GA, 15 October 2019; available at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n19/318/21/pdf/n1931821.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> See the ILO report “Labour administration in a changing world of work”, pages 93 and following and paras 275 and following.

<sup>70</sup> Information available at [https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/italy-new-data-sharing-system-tackle-labour-exploitation\\_en](https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/italy-new-data-sharing-system-tackle-labour-exploitation_en)



Data sharing is not only relevant for the public administration but for the other communities such as the scientist community. A good example of data sharing policies for the scientist community is the **EU Open Science approach**, which seeks to facilitate sharing of data and collaboration, bringing down barriers and enabling data-intensive and massive knowledge and science sharing.

According to the OECD, **enhancing access to and sharing of data (EASD)** has a growing importance in the context of artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things. EASD can optimize social and economic value of data and the way to address risks and challenges<sup>71</sup>.

Some countries have developed a **data sharing national strategy**. For instance, UK, the largest data market in Europe, has adopted a National Data Strategy<sup>72</sup> aimed at boosting the better use of data across businesses, government, civil society and individuals. Other countries as Singapore, Canada, Japan, Ghana or the United States have or are in course of adopting national data sharing strategies. In contrast, many developing countries face hurdles in leveraging synergies from data exchange, this fact being attributed to the existence of sparse financial and technological resources. This situation hampers a sound management of data collection, security and processing.


### Takeaways

- ▶ *Convention No. 150 and Recommendation No, 158 do not spare explicit references to coordination;*
- ▶ *In general, coordination is understood as a means for effective operation and for managing protection of all types of workers, participating in consultative bodies and collaborating with social partners;*
- ▶ *Coordination is a result of the principle of coherence and is a key tool for the good and coherent governance of labour matters and for achieving economic and social progress;*
- ▶ *The lack of coordination and cross-cutting policies will lead to fragmentation, competing and incoherent objectives and inconsistency;*
- ▶ *Information is also shared by the agencies dependant on the labour ministries and the cross-institutional interaction shapes the direction of social policies;*
- ▶ *An effective coordination ensures that the bodies responsible for or involved in labour administration do not overlap their functions and allows the rational and efficient distribution of the available resources;*
- ▶ *The ILO standards also refer to collaboration and cooperation with the private sector in different Conventions and thematic areas of labour administration;*
- ▶ *The management of big data and the use of artificial intelligence have become effective in certain sectors of labour administration such as employment services and labour inspection;*

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<sup>71</sup> OECD (2019), *Enhancing Access to and Sharing of Data: Reconciling Risks and Benefits for Data Re-use across Societies*, OECD Publishing, Paris, page 1; available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/276aaca8-en>

<sup>72</sup> Information available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-national-data-strategy/national-data-strategy#about-the-national-data-strategy>



## D. Reporting: Keeping stakeholders informed about the labour administration performance. Preparing reports, conducting monitoring and evaluations and ensuring transparency.

### 1.1 Overview of reporting activity and international standards



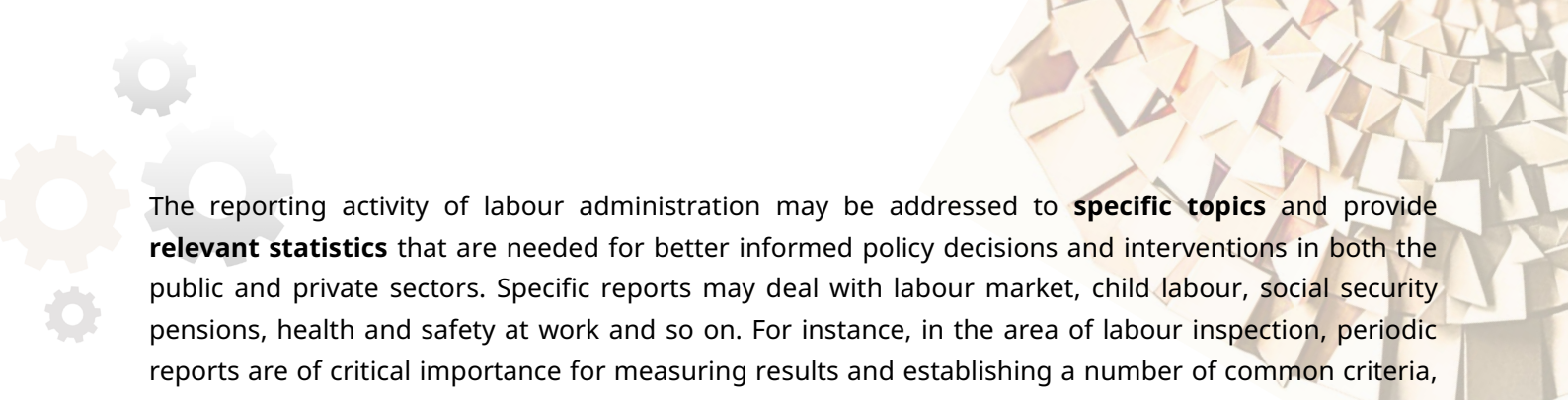
Section no. 20 of the ILO Recommendation No. 158 states that “each of the principal labour administration services (...in the matters of their competencies) should provide periodic information or reports on its activities to the ministry of labour or the other comparable body (administrative and consultative bodies in which information is collected, opinions are considered, decisions are prepared and taken and measures of implementation are devised) as well as to employers' and workers' organisations. The para 2 of this section recommends that “such information or reports should be of a technical nature, include appropriate statistics, and indicate the problems encountered and, if possible, the results achieved in such a manner as to permit an evaluation of present trends and foreseeable future developments in areas of major concern to the system of labour administration”.

Furthermore, section 20 para (3) of above-mentioned Recommendation states that “*the system of labour administration should evaluate, publish and disseminate such information of general interest on labour matters as it is able to derive from its operation*”. Its para (4) continues recommending that “*Members (of the ILO), in consultation with the International Labour Office, should seek to promote the establishment of suitable models for the publication of such information, with a view to improving its international comparability*”.

Finally, the **Labour Statistics Convention No. 160** states in its Article 1 that “*each Member which ratifies this Convention undertakes that it will regularly collect, compile and publish basic labour statistics, which shall be progressively expanded in accordance with its resources to cover the following subjects: (a) economically **active population, employment, where relevant unemployment, and where possible visible underemployment**; (b) structure and distribution of the economically active population, for detailed analysis and to serve as benchmark data; (c) **average earnings and hours of work** (hours actually worked or hours paid for) and, where appropriate, time rates of wages and normal hours of work; (d) wage structure and distribution; (e) **labour cost**; (f) **consumer price indices**; (g) **household expenditure** or, where appropriate, family expenditure and, where possible, **household income** or, where appropriate, family income; (h) **occupational injuries** and, as far as possible, **occupational diseases**; and (i) **industrial disputes**.*”

All this information is to be brought to different reports elaborated by labour administration and should allow the assessment of progress towards goals and enable necessary reforms, making labour administration more transparent. In other words, **appropriate reporting requires** an efficient system of collecting, analysing and communicating the relevant information.

The reports **contain information addressed to** a wide range of recipients, from policy makers to external users such as citizens and the public. When reporting, it is convenient to take on board the most relevant issues for decision makers and figure out how policy makers would like to read the report. A good report ensures transparency and visibility of the activities and achievements and provides information on how plans have been properly executed and attained in a well-targeted manner.



The reporting activity of labour administration may be addressed to **specific topics** and provide **relevant statistics** that are needed for better informed policy decisions and interventions in both the public and private sectors. Specific reports may deal with labour market, child labour, social security pensions, health and safety at work and so on. For instance, in the area of labour inspection, periodic reports are of critical importance for measuring results and establishing a number of common criteria, as well as to improve the efficiency of inspection activities. The central inspection authority often assigns to inspectorates, local offices or regional inspection services the obligation to submit periodical reports and prescribe its frequency (chapter 3.4 of *Guidelines on general principles of labour inspection*<sup>73</sup>).

The reporting has also to provide information on the extent to which the strategy and plan of action have met the SDGs.

On the other hand, the **reporting cycle should be synchronized** with the planning and budget execution cycles and the reporting activity should go in parallel with the plan implementation and the budget calendar. It could be concluded that reporting is a key activity for ensuring coordination, this being the reason why in many countries the bodies or agencies under the direct or indirect supervision of the labour ministry have the obligation to submit periodic reports to the ministry.

► **Box 24. Germany: reporting activity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs**<sup>74</sup>

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany oversees the Federal Employment Agency. The Government indicates that the ministry performs regulatory oversight aimed at ensuring that laws and regulations are observed. In addition, the agency must submit an annual report to the ministry, which must be presented to the board of directors and approved by the administrative council.

► **Box 25. Reporting activity: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Dominican Republic**

In the Dominican Republic, each directorate under the Ministry of Labour sends its quarterly report on the activities carried out to the Directorate of Planning and Development at the ministry for review, consolidation and preparation of the annual report


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<sup>73</sup>[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed\\_dialogue/%40lab\\_admin/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_844153.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_dialogue/%40lab_admin/documents/genericdocument/wcms_844153.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> See the ILO report “Labour administration in a changing world of work”, pages 94 and following and para 280.



## 1.2 Reporting obligations to the International Labour Organisation



▶ The **ILO Convention 150**, in its Article 16, prescribes that *“at such times as it may consider necessary, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office shall present to the General Conference a report on the working of this Convention and shall examine the desirability of placing on the agenda of the Conference the question of its revision in whole or in part”*.

This reporting activity is based on **the constitutional reporting obligations** under Articles 19, 22 and 35 of **the Constitution**. According to the former one, all member States (who have ratified the Convention) have an obligation to submit Conventions and Recommendations to the competent national authorities, and Members shall report to the Director-General of the International Labour Office, at appropriate intervals as requested by the Governing Body, on the position of their law and practice in regard to the matters dealt with in unratified Conventions and in Recommendations.

On this basis, the Governing Body selects each year the Conventions and Recommendations on which member States are requested to supply reports. These reports, as well as those submitted under **Article 22** of the ILO Constitution by the States parties to the Conventions concerned and the comments received by employers’ and workers’ organizations, allow **the CEACR to draft General Surveys** on the effect given, in law and in practice, to the instruments considered.

According to Article 22 of the ILO Constitution, each of the Members agrees to make an annual report to the International Labour Office on the measures taken to give effect to the provisions of Conventions to which it is a party. These reports shall be made in such form and shall contain such particulars as the Governing Body may request.

In summary, there are **three types of reports on Conventions and Recommendations**, all obligatory under the ILO Constitution.


- ▶ Reporting on Conventions ratified by a country (ILO Constitution Article 22 – *“Article 22 reports”*);
- ▶ Reporting on unratified Conventions and Recommendations (ILO Constitution Article 19 (5) (e) and Article 19 (6) (d) – *“Article 19 reports”*)
- ▶ Reporting on submission of ILO Conventions and Recommendations to Parliament (ILO Constitution Article 19 (5) (b) and Article 19 (6) (b))

**Two ILO bodies deal with the reports** sent from each country. On the one hand, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), which issues:

- ▶ Comments, observations -more formal or serious-, consisting of points of non-conformity or progress in implementation;
- ▶ Direct Requests: Requests for more information.

On the other hand, the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS), which meets during the ILC (June), discusses, on the basis of the report of the CEACR:

- ▶ Serious cases of violation of Conventions (list of individual cases);

- 
- ▶ How reporting obligations are fulfilled by Members;
  - ▶ Conclusions.

### 1.3 General requirements of labour administration reports

The **different bodies** under the supervision and responsibility of the labour ministry have the obligation to submit periodic reports to the ministry (for example, PES and labour inspection usually make annual reports of their activity and present them to the ministry). Labour administration reports should comply with a number of **requirements**, namely:

- ▶ Be gender-responsive, including sex-disaggregated data;
- ▶ Deliver information and statistics concerning injuries in the workplace and their impact in terms of human, material and financial costs;
- ▶ Provide information on the application of laws and bylaws (for example, regulations concerning OSH, employment or labour relations)
- ▶ Focus on relevant aspects such as objectives and the means to reach them, like activities and outcomes;
- ▶ The information should help understand how policy decisions are taken and a given strategy implemented;
- ▶ The information should be user-friendly, concise, simply expressed and with as much as possible visual information;
- ▶ It is crucial to accompany information with relevant data related to public institutions and participating stakeholders, commitments agreed, key findings, challenges identified and possible solutions;
- ▶ A good part of a report must contain the information collected during the evaluation or monitoring process; this reports are in the interest of policy makers, stakeholders and the public in general;
- ▶ The reports should include conclusions on what improvements and reforms are needed.

A **typical report of labour administration** should at least cover the following aspects:

- ▶ Strategy, objectives and outcomes;
- ▶ Action plan including activities, outputs and indicators;
- ▶ Operational difficulties and risks, major bottlenecks and challenges;
- ▶ Corrective measures;
- ▶ Pace of implementation and accountability;
- ▶ Methodology for data collection and analysis;
- ▶ Synergies and cooperation harnessed from other institutions;
- ▶ Financial resources and public procurement procedures.

Sometimes, labour administration's reports have a strong impact on the country's national policies and are extremely important for that country and even for the whole world. This is the case described in the box below.



► **Box 26. United States: the power of the Bureau of Labour Statistics over the stock and bond markets**

In some countries labour administration is entrusted with the task of delivering reports on a wide range of labour data which are relevant not only for the labour matters but also have an impact on the economy. This is the case, for instance, of the US Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS), which depends on the US Department of Labour<sup>75</sup>. The BLS delivers monthly information on matters such as:

- Consumer Price Index (CPI);
- Producers Price index (PPI);
- Total nonfarm payroll employment and national employment rate;
- Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS);
- Workplace injuries;
- Strikes and lockouts;
- Workers' earnings;
- Productivity;
- Geographic information

These data, in particular the CPI and the nonfarm payrolls, are of paramount importance for knowing the performance of the economy and may stir up the bonds and stocks markets of the whole world making them tumble or soar. They also may lead to a change of the monetary policy of the central banks and to volatility in the dollar exchange rates.

A key issue concerning the reporting activity is the **detailed contents of the information** to be delivered, but also the reporting cycle and that reports be produced on time.

► **Box 27. Example of the contents of a labour ministry annual report**

An example of the contents of an annual report of a labour ministry could be set out as follows:

- Overview: Ministry or Management Board statement (purpose of the Ministry);
- Executive summary;
- Strategic direction, commitments and achievements of the year;
- Operating and economic environment;
- Management policy, planning performance and programmes;
  - Chapter I: National labour policy
  - Chapter II: Labour standards
  - Chapter III: Employment
  - Chapter IV: Labour relations
  - Chapter V: Labour protection (occupational health, minimum wage)

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<sup>75</sup> See <https://www.bls.gov/>

- Chapter VI: Social protection/social security
- Chapter VII: International labour affairs
- Liaisons: agencies, boards and commissions;
- Governance and coordination;
- Cooperation and stakeholders;
- Communication and outreach, reporting policy, studies, research and statistics;
- Human resources management;
- Skills, capacity building and training;
- Budgetary and financial management;
- Major developments;
- Monitoring, evaluation and assessment by management;
- Risk management;
- Strategy for efficiency and assessment of the effectiveness;
- Internal audit and internal control systems;
- Follow-up on recommendations made by policy makers;
- **ANNEXES**
  - Annex I. Core business statistics;
  - Annex II. Statistics on financial management;
  - Annex III Budgetary appropriations;
  - Annex IV Organisation chart ;
  - Annex V. Human and financial resources by activity;
  - Annex VI. Contributions, grants, donors and agreements and financial framework partnership agreements;
  - Annex VII. Annual accounts;

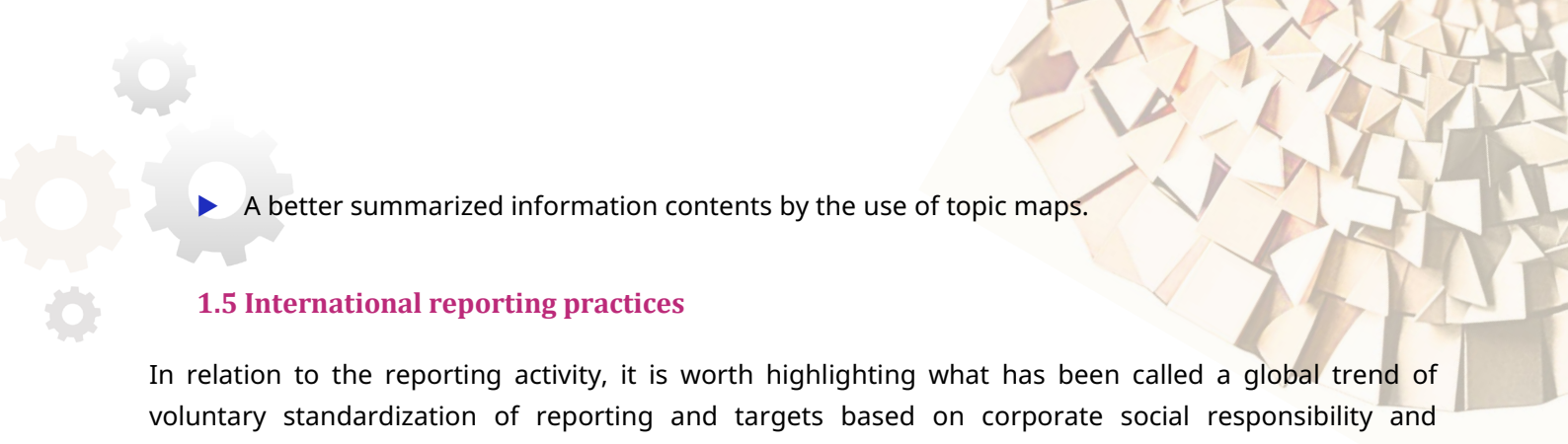
### 1.4 Elaboration of reports

A **good quality reporting activity requires** adequate skills to analyse data and draw conclusions, to communicate information in an attractive way, and to present data in an intuitive manner. It should be advisable to consult with communication and public relations experts in order to report in an innovative way about how to present information and results.

Monotonous narrative should be avoided in order to prevent readers from falling into fatigue and the report should be easy to read. Too long reports could be counter-productive as it is but quality more than quantity which chiefly matters. The **frequency of reports** depends on each country's national practice and the type of performance subject to information. Most reports are issued on an annual basis, in particular where indicators, outcomes and outputs can be measured annually. Some other times, the information is delivered quarterly or monthly. The elaboration of reports is time-consuming if the purpose is to make it produce the expected benefits and be of actual usefulness.

On the other hand, **e-Government has brought a new way of reporting** entailing;

- ▶ A better information through access to internet;
- ▶ A better interaction between different public platforms;
- ▶ A better structured information and a clearer vision for the citizen;
- ▶ A better open data policy;

- 
- ▶ A better summarized information contents by the use of topic maps.

### 1.5 International reporting practices

In relation to the reporting activity, it is worth highlighting what has been called a global trend of voluntary standardization of reporting and targets based on corporate social responsibility and sustainability. There is a growing expansion of voluntary reporting standardisation practices related to companies' commitments to quality and excellence<sup>76</sup>.

A good part of the information contained in these reporting practices refer to issues in which labour administration is competent. This trend is spreading like wildfire around the world. The US OSHA White Paper, the Sustainability Metrics of the *Illinois Centre for Occupational Safety and Health Sustainability*, the GRIs 402, 403 or 408 guidelines for reporting on labour and occupational safety and health, the SASB materiality mapping<sup>77</sup> or the material value of compliance (materiality matrices) have been milestones of this trend<sup>78</sup>. Labour administration should pay attention to and monitor closely all these world's sustainability reporting standards that seek to be more transparent about their environmental, economic, and social impacts and help identify, gather, and report information in a clear and comparable manner.

#### Takeaways:

- ▶ *Appropriate reporting requires an efficient system of collecting, analysing and communicating the relevant information;*
- ▶ *When reporting, try to take into account the most relevant issues for decision makers and figure out how policy makers would like to read the report;*
- ▶ *Different bodies under the supervision and responsibility of the labour ministry also have the obligation to submit periodic reports to the ministry;*
- ▶ *Too long reports could be counter-productive, as it is quality, rather than quantity, which matters; the report should be concise, well structured, analytical and results-focused;*
- ▶ *Consult with communications and public relations experts in order to report in an innovative way about how to present information and results;*
- ▶ *A good report influences changes and ensures reform success;*
- ▶ *Good monitoring and evaluation are necessary to find out whether planned targets have been met and require well-defined indicators, baselines and targets;*
- ▶ *Monitoring and reporting requires involvement of managers and decision makers;*

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<sup>76</sup> More information at <http://www.coca-colacompany.com/our-company/safety-health/en> and at <https://www.basf.com/global/en/investors/sustainable-investments/global-sustainability-goals.html>; see also Jan Erik Karlsen MSc MA MBA MPhil PhD & Preben Hempel Lindøe MSc PhD (2006): *The Nordic Osh Model at a Turning Point?*; Policy and Practice in Health and Safety, 4:1 17; available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233514116> *The Nordic Osh Model at a Turning Point*

<sup>77</sup> Sustainability Accounting Standards Board.

<sup>78</sup> Pablo Páramo Montero, *Nuevos enfoques sobre la seguridad y salud laboral en empresas sostenibles*. Trabajo y derecho: nueva revista de actualidad y relaciones laborales, ISSN 2386-8090, N°. 40, 2018, págs. 46-66;



## Exercise – Strategic planning and policy coordination in labour administration

### Goal

Develop together a shared understanding of how labour administration systems can strengthen strategic planning and policy formulation, improve coordination and partnerships with other actors, and better anticipate and manage risks, in order to achieve desired outcomes in the evolving world of work.

### Suggested time

1 session of 90 minutes.

### Method

Guided discussion in small groups followed by a plenary exchange, focusing on how strategic planning and policy coordination practices can support the transition from current approaches to more coherent, forward-looking and inclusive labour administration systems.

### Preparation

- ✓ Adapt the exercise questions (below) to the national or institutional context of labour administration.
- ✓ Prepare handouts with the questions, or display them on a flip chart.
- ✓ If relevant, prepare a brief description of a recent or ongoing policy challenge (for example, digitalization, informal economy, labour migration, crisis response).
- ✓ Materials: flip charts, markers, tape.

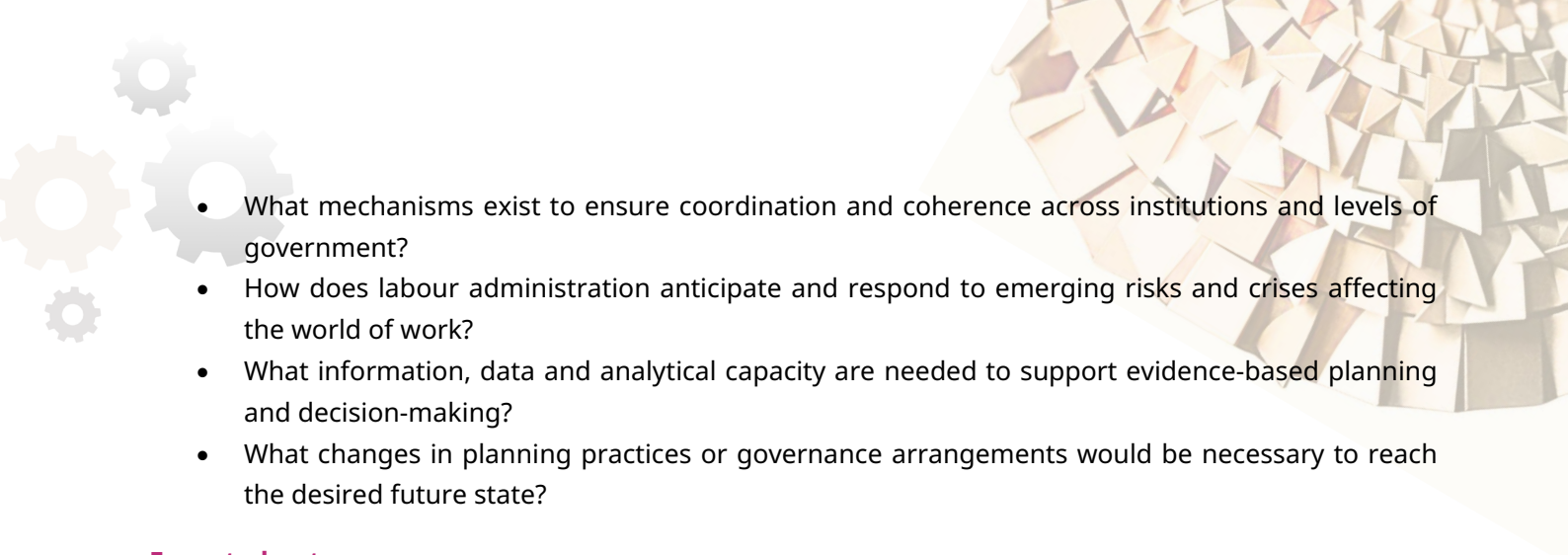
### During the exercise

1. Divide participants into small groups. Ask them to discuss the questions and record their reflections on a flip chart, contrasting **current planning and policy practices with the desired future state**, and identifying what needs to change to bridge the gap.
2. Each group nominates a rapporteur to present the results in plenary.
3. In plenary, rapporteurs present their conclusions. Participants identify common challenges related to planning, coordination and partnerships, and discuss differences in strategic approaches.
4. The facilitator guides the discussion towards **practical directions for improving strategic planning, policy coherence and risk management**.

### Helpful questions for the discussion

Reflecting on current strategic planning and policy practices in labour administration:

- How are priorities for labour administration currently defined and updated?
- To what extent are labour policies guided by a clear strategic vision and medium- or long-term planning?
- How are different functions and services aligned within a single strategic framework?
- How are other ministries, public agencies, social partners and non-state actors involved in planning and policy formulation?

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- What mechanisms exist to ensure coordination and coherence across institutions and levels of government?
  - How does labour administration anticipate and respond to emerging risks and crises affecting the world of work?
  - What information, data and analytical capacity are needed to support evidence-based planning and decision-making?
  - What changes in planning practices or governance arrangements would be necessary to reach the desired future state?

### **Expected outcome**

The discussion should clarify gaps between current and desired approaches to strategic planning and policy coordination in labour administration, identify key weaknesses and risks, and highlight practical directions for strengthening planning, partnerships and resilience.

### **Tips for trainers**

This exercise can be implemented as a stand-alone activity focusing on strategic planning and policy formulation in labour administration. It can also be used as part of an integrated sequence, following exercises on functions (Module 1), organization (Module 2) and resource management (Module 3). In this case, it supports further reflection on performance measurement, indicators of effectiveness and social dialogue in subsequent modules.



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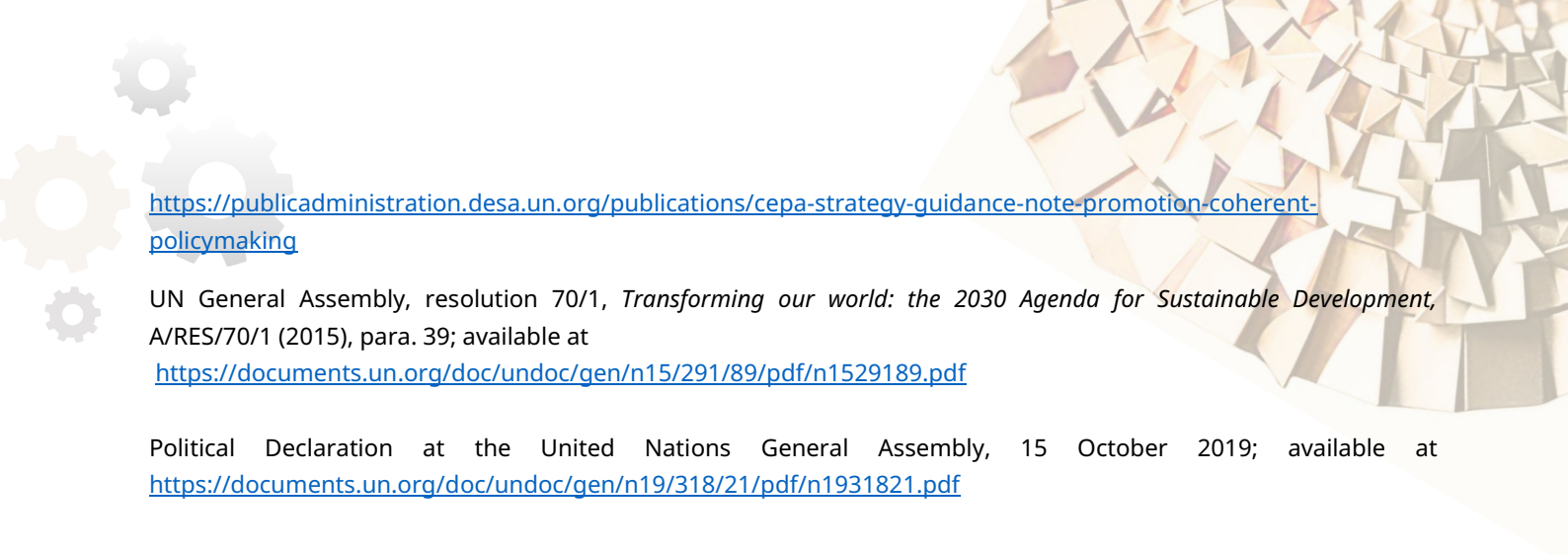
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