



Toolbox for the collection and use of OSH data

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Guidance materials

The materials included in this section provide guidance on a number of areas to be considered for improving national systems of recording and notification, as well as complementary methods for occupational safety and health (OSH) data collection for prevention purposes.

ILO codes of practice and resolutions set out practical guidance for authorities, employers, workers, enterprises and specialized OSH bodies. They provide detailed technical specifications and practical recommendations in a legal terminology. These guidelines feature the basic requirements for the development and improvement of policies and legislation in a number of areas related to data collection and use.

The ILO also develops practical and easy-to-use training guides to help users (government officials, employers, managers, supervisors, workers and their representatives, and all those concerned with OSH) identify key priorities, elaborate coherent and relevant policies and programmes, and establish effective and efficient OSH management systems and workplace interventions.

[ILO code of practice: Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases \(1996\)](#)

This code gives practical recommendations for improving the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases to develop preventive measures. Topics covered include legal and administrative arrangements, enterprise level recording, the extension of provisions to the self-employed, the compilation of statistics and the investigation of occupational accidents and diseases. Equivalent recommendations are made for commuting accidents, dangerous occurrences and incidents.

[ILO code of practice: Protection of workers' personal data \(1997\)](#)

This code provides guidance on the protection of workers' personal data, including health data with the aim of safeguarding their dignity, protecting their privacy and guaranteeing their fundamental right to determine who may use which data for what purposes and under what conditions. It includes specific recommendations regarding the collection, security, storage, use and communication of such data. Guidance on individual and collective rights of workers and the role of employment agencies is also given.

[Resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries \(resulting from occupational accidents\), adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians \(1998\)](#)

This resolution provides for standards of good practice for the collection and presentation of statistics of occupational injuries as guidance for countries wishing to revise their existing statistical systems in this field or establish new ones. Its provisions should not undermine any existing national systems, nor should they lead to duplication of effort. However, they are an international reference that supports harmonization of statistics and indicators at national, regional and international levels to enhance compatibility of data between countries.

[Technical and ethical guidelines for workers' health surveillance \(Occupational Safety and Health Series No. 72\) \(1998\)](#)

These guidelines focus on the design, establishment, implementation and management of workers' health surveillance schemes, leading to a healthy and safe working environment. They cover practical aspects of organizing workers' health surveillance and the collection, processing and communication of health-related data, as well as the use of such data and the rights, responsibilities and duties of the different parties.

[**Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems, ILO-OSH 2001**](#)

These guidelines call for coherent policies to protect workers from occupational hazards and risks while improving productivity. They present practical approaches and tools for assisting competent national institutions, employers, workers and their organizations, as well as other partners in establishing, implementing and improving workplace OSH management systems, with the aim of reducing work-related injuries, diseases, incidents and deaths. These guidelines may be applied both at national and organizational levels.

[**Occupational injuries statistics from household surveys and establishment surveys, ILO manual on methods \(2008\)**](#)

This manual aims at supporting those responsible for compiling data on occupational injuries to use household surveys and establishment surveys to complement traditional means of collecting those data. In-depth explanation of the concepts underlying the statistics, types of data, classification schemes, calculation of indicators and other relevant aspects are included. Model questionnaires and training materials are also provided.

[**List of occupational diseases \(revised 2010\). Identification and recognition of occupational diseases: Criteria for incorporating diseases in the ILO list of occupational diseases. Geneva, ILO \(Occupational Safety and Health Series, No. 74\) \(2010\)**](#)

This publication includes the ILO list of occupational diseases, appended to recommendation No. 194 and updated in 2010, which reflects the latest developments in the identification and recognition of occupational diseases. It aims at assisting countries in the design of national list. The publication also contains preliminary criteria for incorporating occupational diseases in national lists and the reports of the two latest Meetings of Experts which updated the list.

[**Improvement of national reporting, data collection and analysis of occupational accidents and diseases \(2012\)**](#)

This publication elaborates on the importance and benefits of national reporting of occupational accidents and diseases, how it can be improved and how the data can be evaluated and analysed. It discusses the economic dimension of targeted prevention strategies and the need for reliable data. Practical recommendations on how to establish or improve a recording system are given on the basis of the experience in the German system of statutory accident insurance.

[**Training package on development of a national programme of occupational safety and health \(2012\)**](#)

This manual is intended to support training activities aimed at promoting the ILO's strategic approach for designing national policies and programmes on OSH. In particular, Module 3 provides guidance on the essential contents of a national OSH profile, potential information sources and the process for collecting information. It also provides guidance on the process of analysing the information collected and the setting of national priorities on OSH.

[**National system for recording and notification of occupational diseases: Practical guide \(2013\)**](#)

This guide describes the key components of a national systems for recording and notification of occupational diseases. It provides suggestions for the effective operation of occupational disease data collection systems, as well as practical recommendations on how to establish and improve an occupational injury and illness surveillance system. National occupational disease reporting systems of several countries are briefly described as examples in the annexes to this publication.

[Strengthening the role of employment injury schemes to help prevent occupational accidents and diseases](#) (2013)

The guide gives an overview of the principles behind employment injury schemes, the different types of schemes and their areas (such as coverage, benefits, contributions, administration and oversight) and the preventive programmes and activities, aiming at providing policy recommendations for future action in this area. Targeting a mixed audience of national authorities dealing with OSH, it encourages active collaboration among all stakeholders involved in OSH and employment injury schemes at different stages.

[Investigation of occupational accidents and diseases](#) (2015)

This guide is designed to furnish labour inspectors with the necessary skills to conduct effective investigations on occupational accidents and diseases and other undesired events (such as dangerous occurrences and near miss / incidents) that could have led to personal injuries affecting workers or members of the public. The methodology will help inspectors to identify all the immediate and root causes of the event under investigation. This, in turn, will enable inspectors to help employers, enterprises and workers' representatives to identify appropriate prevention and control measures to prevent a recurrence of the actions that led to the event under investigation, thereby improving OSH management.

[Essentials of Occupational Safety and Health \(EOSH\) Package](#) (2016)

This training package covers the essential aspects of OSH and can be used to meet workers', supervisors' and line-managers' training needs. It consists of 25 training modules which cover the essential notions of OSH including accidents prevention and reporting. The package was developed by the Programme for Employers' Activities in the International Training Centre of the ILO, aiming to provide training to strengthen employers' representatives in areas that are strategic for economic growth, governance, development and poverty alleviation.

[Guide on the Harmonization of Labour Inspection Statistics](#) (2016)

This publication presents a methodology for the harmonized use of terms, definitions and procedures for the collection of labour inspection data. It also incorporates several additional recommendations, with the aim of improving the harmonization of labour inspection statistics.

[Collection and Use of Labour Inspection Statistics – A short guide](#) (2017)

This guide is intended to introduce governments, in particular ministries of labour and labour inspectorates to the importance of elaborating labour inspection statistics and the benefits that can be derived from them. The guide presents, in a user-friendly manner, practical advice about labour inspection information and statistics. It details the ways in which they can increase the efficiency of inspectorates, what areas they should cover and how they can be produced, interpreted and presented to stakeholders.

[Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety \(Chapter 32 - Record Systems and Surveillance\)](#)

The encyclopaedia presents a panoramic view of the basic available information in the field of OSH. It has been designed to provide users with background information on the broad discipline of occupational risks prevention in an understandable manner that, at the same time, can be considered rigorous by professionals in this field. Chapter 32 provides relevant information on recording systems and surveillance, including case studies related to statistics and surveys on occupational accidents and diseases.

International Labour Standards

International labour standards are legal instruments drawn up by the ILO's International Labour Conference with the involvement of constituents (governments, employers and workers and their representatives) setting out basic principles and rights at work. They are either Conventions, which are legally binding international treaties that may be ratified by member States, laying down the basic principles to be implemented by countries; or Recommendations, which serve as non-binding guidelines and in many cases, accompany and supplement a convention, by providing more detailed guidance on how to apply the Convention's provisions. Recommendations can also be independent, i.e. not linked to any Convention.

Occupational safety and health (OSH) in general

Protection of Workers' Health Recommendation, 1953 (No. 97)

This Recommendation contains guidance on methods for preventing, reducing or eliminating risks to health in the workplace. It also specifies requirements on workers' medical examinations and notification of occupational diseases, including the information that should be contained in the notification.

Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)

This Convention provides for the adoption of a coherent national OSH policy, as well as action to be taken by governments and within enterprises to promote OSH and to improve working conditions. Article 11(c) of the Convention requires the establishment and application of procedures for the notification of occupational accidents and diseases and the production of annual statistics on occupational accidents and diseases.

Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164)

This Recommendation provides for specific actions to be taken at national and enterprise level to implement the Convention No. 155. Article 15(2) of the Recommendation guides employers to keep records relevant to OSH and the working environment as requested by the competent authority, including all notifiable occupational accidents and diseases and data concerning exposure to specified substances and agents.

Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)

This Protocol complements the Convention No. 155 without modifying it and incorporates additional provisions for the establishment and periodic review of requirements and procedures for the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases and for the publication of related annual statistics.

Occupational Health Service Convention, 1985 (No. 161)

This Convention provides for the establishment of enterprise level occupational health services which are entrusted with essentially preventive functions and responsible for advising the employer, workers and their representatives in the enterprise on maintaining a safe and healthy working environment.

Occupational Health Service Recommendation, 1985 (No. 171)

This Recommendation contains detailed provisions on the functions to be carried out by occupational health services, including surveillance of workers' health in relation to work and the collection and use of OSH data for preventive purposes.

Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174)

This Convention provides for a systematic and comprehensive model framework for the protection of workers, the public, and the environment against major industrial accidents. The standard provides for the systematic identification and control of hazards and risks in major hazard installations; defines the duties of competent authorities and employers, and the rights and responsibilities of workers in the case of a major accident.

Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No.187)

This Convention is designed to provide for coherent and systematic approach on OSH at national level, by means of establishing and implementing coherent national policies through dialogue between government, workers' and employers' organizations; and promoting a national preventive safety and health culture. It refers to the structure, the system and the different stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in this area. It complements the other two core conventions (No.155 and No 161) and promotes, for the first time, the application of relevant conventions on OSH. According to Article 4 (3) of the Convention, the national system shall include, where appropriate, a mechanism for the collection and analysis of data on occupational injuries and diseases, taking into account relevant ILO instruments.

Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)

This Recommendation provides further guidance for the development and implementation of the national system for OSH, the national policy and the national programme. It also describes the information to be included in the compilation of a national profile on OSH. These profiles should serve as a baseline to assess performance in improving the national system.

List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194)

The list attached to this Recommendation can be used by countries as a model for designing, improving or harmonizing their national list of occupational diseases. The Recommendation provides an innovative and simplified procedure for updating the list on a regular basis according to technical and scientific development. As stated in Article 6 of the Recommendation, each member State should furnish annually to the ILO comprehensive statistics on occupational accidents and diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences and commuting accidents.

Occupational Safety and Health in specific branches of activity or specific hazards

[Occupational Safety and Health \(Dock Work\) Convention, 1979 \(No. 152\)](#)

This Convention requires ratifying member States to take measures with a view to providing and maintaining workplaces, equipment and methods of work that are safe and without risk of injury to health. In particular, Article 36 of the Convention describes the requirements concerning medical examinations and investigations, as well as their recording.

[Asbestos Convention, 1986 \(No. 162\)](#)

This Convention enumerates various detailed measures, which are based essentially on the prevention and control of health hazards due to occupational exposure to asbestos, and the protection of workers against these hazards. Article 20 and 21 of the Convention deals with the surveillance of the working environment and workers' health, including the requirement for the competent authority to develop a system of notification of occupational diseases caused by asbestos.

[Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 \(No. 167\)](#)

This Convention provides for detailed technical preventive and protective measures for the specific requirements of the construction sector. These measures relate to safety of workplaces, machines and equipment, work at heights and work executed in compressed air, among others. Article 34 of the Convention deals with the reporting of occupational accidents and diseases.

[Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 \(No. 176\)](#)

This Convention regulates the various aspects of safety and health for work in mines, including inspection, special working devices, and special protective equipment of workers. It also prescribes requirements relating to mine rescue. According to Article 5(2) of the Convention, national laws and regulations shall provide for the procedures for reporting and investigating fatal and serious accidents, dangerous occurrences and mine disasters. In addition, Article 13 provides for the right of workers to report accidents, dangerous occurrences and hazards to the employer and to the competent authority.

[Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 \(No. 184\)](#)

This Convention has the objective of preventing accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with, or occurring in the course of agricultural work. To this end, the Convention includes measures relating to machinery safety and ergonomics, handling and transport of materials, sound management of chemicals, animal handling, protection against biological risks, and welfare and accommodation facilities.

[Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001 \(No. 192\)](#)

This Recommendation complements the Convention No. 184. According to Article 3(2) of the Recommendation, the competent authority designated to implement the national policy should, after consulting the representative organizations of employers and workers concerned, establish procedures for the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in agriculture, including for the compilation of statistics.

Labour Inspection

[Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 \(No. 81\)](#)

This Convention requires ratifying member States to maintain a system of labour inspection for workplaces in industry and commerce; member States can exclude mining and transport. It sets out a series of principles concerning the legislation covered by labour inspection; functions and organization of the inspection system; recruitment criteria; status, terms and conditions of service of labour inspectors; and their powers and obligations. The labour inspectorate has to publish and communicate to the ILO an annual report indicating the general functioning of its services on a number of issues, including statistics on occupational accidents and diseases.

[Labour Inspection Recommendation, 1947 \(No. 81\)](#)

This Recommendation contains further provisions for collaboration between inspectors, employers, workers and their representatives in the field of OSH. Article 9 of the Recommendation defines the information that the published annual reports of inspection services should supply, including statistics of occupational accidents and diseases.

[Labour Inspection \(Agriculture\) Convention, 1969 \(No. 129\)](#)

This Convention, similar in content to Convention No. 81, has a sectorial approach and requires ratifying states to establish and maintain a system of labour inspection in agriculture. Labour inspection coverage may also be extended to tenants who do not engage outside help, sharecroppers and similar categories of agricultural workers; persons participating in a collective economic enterprise, such as members of a cooperative; or members of the family of the operator of the agricultural undertaking, as defined by national laws or regulations. According to Article 19 of the Convention, the labour inspectorate in agriculture should be notified of occupational accidents and cases of occupational disease occurring in the agricultural sector. Inspectors should also be associated with any inquiry on the spot into the causes of the most serious occupational accidents or occupational diseases, particularly of those which affect a number of workers or have fatal consequences.

Social protection

[Social Security \(Minimum Standards\) Convention, 1952 \(No. 102\)](#)

This Convention lays down the key standards on social security and its benefits, as well as the conditions under which they are granted. It covers the nine principal branches of social security, namely medical care, sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity and survivors' benefits. With regard to the employment injury benefit, the Convention defines the contingencies covered and medical care to be provided.

Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121)

This Convention establishes the fundamental principles of compensation for damages sustained from occupational accidents and diseases, as well as commuting accidents. Article 7 of the Convention requires member States to provide a definition of “industrial accident”, including the conditions under which a commuting accident is considered to be an industrial accident, while Article 8 provides for different option for the definition of occupational diseases. Schedule I on Occupational Diseases amended in 1980 is the original list that identifies, on the one hand, categories of occupational diseases and, on the other hand, the types of work involving exposure to the risk. It was further revised by the List in the Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194). Member States ratifying this Convention may choose which list to use as a reference. However, the ILO promotes the updated version.

Employment Injury Benefits Recommendation, 1964 (No. 121)

This Recommendation indicates the cases in which accidents should be considered by national legislation as industrial accidents, as well as the conditions under which the occupational origin of the disease should be presumed.

Statistics

Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160)

This Convention sets out provisions encompassing all areas of basic labour statistics. Each member State which have ratified this Convention is required to regularly collect, compile, publish, and communicate to the ILO, as soon as practicable, basic labour statistics which are to be progressively extended to cover all the areas including occupational injuries and, as far as possible, occupational diseases.

Labour Statistics Recommendation, 1985 (No. 170)

This Recommendation contains guidance on the classification of statistics in the various fields, including occupational injuries and diseases. It also calls for all member States to progressively develop the appropriate national statistical infrastructure for the purpose of collecting and compiling labour statistics.

Good practices at the country level

This set of publications provide guidance and information based on good practices and lessons learned at national level.

The ILO General Survey, mainly based on reports received from member States and social partners, examines the impact of certain conventions and recommendations and the difficulties indicated by governments as impeding their application, with the view of identifying means of overcoming these obstacles. The three national studies (from Malawi, Moldova and Zambia) were carried out under the ILO project “Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work Agenda” funded by the European Commission. One of the main outputs of the projects, was a methodology to more accurately determine occupational accidents and diseases in the target countries. The case study of Malaysia was presented in the occasion of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work in 2013 which focused on the prevention of occupational diseases.

General Survey concerning the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164), and the Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (2009)

This survey, reported by the International Labour Office to the International Labour Conference in 2009, aimed at contributing to a better understanding and fuller application of the provisions of three central ILO instruments in the area of OSH: the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); the Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164); and the Protocol of 2002 to Convention No. 155. The ILO was requested by the Conference to support member States and enable them to have a more effective impact in the conventions’ application at the enterprise level. Chapter III (“Recording and notification and the 2002 Protocol”) describes the situation and the performance of national recording and notification systems in member States.

National study on the system for recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in the Republic of Moldova (2013)

This study, based on relevant ILO standards, explores the basic practices and procedures applied at both national and enterprise levels. It provides information to promote the application of a coherent and harmonised system for collection, recording and notification of reliable data on the topic, and related statistics in the workplace, at both national and international levels.

National study on recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in Zambia (2013)

This study describes the coverage, legislation and gaps of the national system on recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in Zambia. Based on the analysis and evaluation of the current recording and notification system, the report also sheds light into the enhanced system through updated legislation, relevant institutions roles and close collaboration of stakeholders.

Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in Malawi 2012 (2013)

This study explores the existing systems for recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases in Malawi. Based on the view and suggestion of the social partners (Government, Employers and Workers), the study suggests practical solutions to promote the application of a coherent and harmonised system for collection, recording and notification of reliable data on occupational accidents, diseases and related statistics at the enterprise and national levels.

[Case Study - Malaysia: National System for the Recognition of Occupational Diseases \(2013\)](#)

This case study describes the progress of Malaysia in the improvement of its system for the identification, recording and compensation of occupational diseases. It gives an example on the importance of collecting accurate data on occupational diseases and identifying their causes in order to establish appropriate preventive and control measures.

[Country profiles on occupational safety and health](#)

These country profiles offer an overview and information of national system on OSH in ILO member States including recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, through national policies, legislation and regulatory framework, and national programmes.

Strategy documents and reports

The ILO strategy documents aim at assisting member States in the development and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the prevention and control of occupational accidents and diseases.

The set of ILO technical reports reveal the social and economic impact of occupational accidents and diseases and examine the best approaches to tackle this global burden.

[Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health: Conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 91st Session \(2003\)](#)

The Global Strategy confirms the role of ILO instruments as a central pillar for the promotion of occupational safety and health and calls for integrated action that better relates ILO standards with other means of action (such as advocacy, awareness raising, knowledge development, management, information dissemination and technical cooperation) in order to maximize impact. It pinpoints the need for tripartite national commitment and national action in fostering a preventive approach and a safety culture which are key to achieving lasting improvements in safety and health at work.

[ILO Governing Body 317th Session, Prevention of occupational diseases \(2013\)](#)

This policy paper examines the scale and dynamic nature of occupational diseases and the challenges associated with their prevention. In particular, Section II focuses on national data collection system for occupational diseases, including challenges and different channels for data collection. Drawing on experiences at the national and international levels, this paper puts forward a proposed ILO strategy for strengthening action in the prevention of occupational diseases for the approval of the Governing Body and further action.

[ILO introductory report: Global trends and challenges on occupational safety and health, Report, XIX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, Istanbul \(2011\)](#)

This report concerns some of the achievements and challenges since the adoption of the Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work in 2008. Global and regional estimates have been prepared for this report, as for those of previous World Congresses using a methodology developed over the last decade. Comparisons with estimates from previous years are also included.

[Estimating the economic costs of occupational injuries and illnesses in developing countries: Essential information for decision-makers](#) (2012)

This report describes the elements which should be taken into account in determining the cost of occupational accidents and diseases at national level, with a focus on developing countries. The purpose is helping countries to identify the economic costs of not improving OSH (to employers, workers and society as a whole) as well as raising awareness among decision-makers to facilitate policy integration by making the linkages between OSH and other policy interventions.

[The Prevention of Occupational Diseases: World Day for Safety and Health at Work Report](#) (2013)

This report produced for the 2013 campaign for the World Day for Safety and Health at Work outlines the current situation concerning occupational diseases and presents proposals for addressing this serious decent work deficit. While much progress has been made in addressing the challenges of occupational diseases, there is a need to strengthen the capacity for their prevention in national OSH systems.

[Safety and Health at Work: A Vision for Sustainable Prevention](#) (2014)

This report reviews what is being done to promote sustainable prevention globally and to encourage greater participatory efforts to achieve safer and healthier workplaces. It contains the ILO's global estimates of occupational accidents and work-related diseases, based on the best sources available.

Databases

ILO databases cover legal information, occupational safety and health (OSH) data, statistics, social security and other subjects. The following resources are particularly relevant to the collection and use of OSH data.

[ILO's central statistics database ILOSTAT](#)

This database provides multiple datasets with annual and infra-annual labour market statistics for over 100 indicators and 230 countries, areas and territories. It includes data on fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries by sex, economic activity and occupation; days lost per occupational injury; and labour inspection statistics.

[Global Database on Occupational Safety and Health Legislation \(LEGOSH\)](#)

This database provides a picture of the regulatory framework and the main elements of OSH legislation from a number of countries, including employers' duties and obligations on recording, notification and investigation of occupational accidents, incidents and diseases.