

## 1. Facts and figures

**Type of organisation:** UN specialised agency

**Established in:** 1919

**Headquarters:** Geneva

**Number of country offices:** 63 country offices, incl. regional offices and the ILO office for the UN

**Head of organisation:** Director-General Guy Ryder (United Kingdom)

**Dates of Governing Body meetings in 2013:** 6–28 March, 21 June, 17–31 October

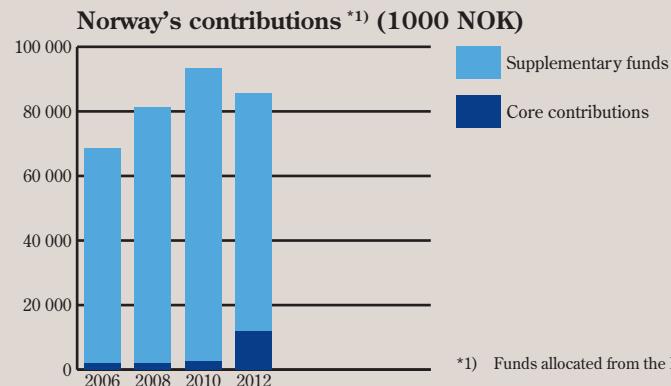
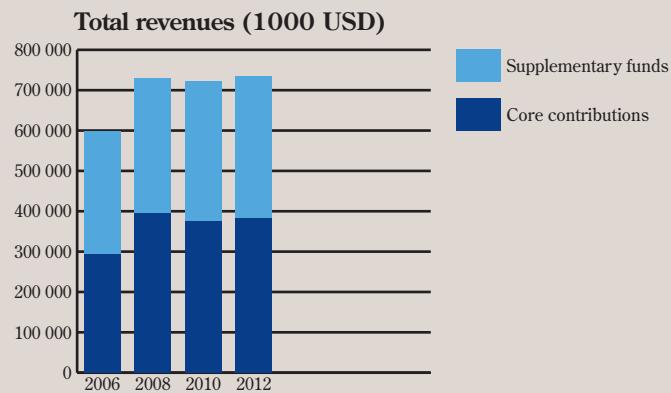
**Date of International Labour Conference (ILO's general assembly) 2013:** 5–20 June

**Norway's representation in ILO:** One Nordic country is represented in the Governing Body in each term; Denmark holds the seat for 2011–2014. The Nordic countries' representation is based on an informal rotation system, and Norway will assume the seat in the Governing Body in 2014.

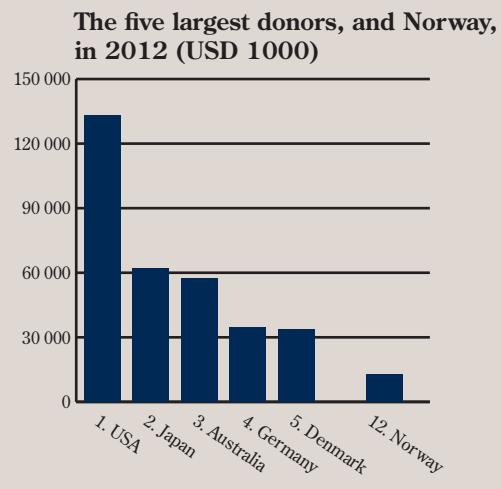
**Number of Norwegian staff:** 11

**Competent ministry:** The Norwegian Ministry of Labour in collaboration with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Website:** [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)



\*) Funds allocated from the MFA's budget



## Mandate and areas of activity

The International Labour Organization (ILO) was established in 1919, and was incorporated into the UN system in 1945 as the UN's specialised agency for labour issues. ILO's mandate is to promote social justice through full employment with respect for workers' rights, dialogue between the social partners and social protection. ILO differs from other UN organisations by virtue of its characteristic tripartite structure in which governments, workers and employers are all full members with decision-making authority.

ILO plays an increasingly pivotal and relevant role in the globalised economy, in the field of international law, as a normative actor, as a political arena, as a country-level actor and as a driving force in relation to other international organisations. As a result of the economic crisis that followed in the wake of the financial crisis, there is growing unemployment and pressure on workers' rights, labour standards and social protection programmes. This situation has highlighted the importance of ILO.

ILO is responsible for developing and enforcing international labour standards, primarily through conventions and recommendations. The organisation is also engaged in wide-ranging development cooperation to help Member States accede to, implement and enforce the conventions and recommendations. ILO conventions form the basis for workers' rights and are important tools in the implementation of these rights. It is common to emphasise ILO's eight core conventions, which are in turn divided into four main categories.

1. Abolition of child labour: ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work (ratified by 160 states) and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ratified by 174 states).
2. Elimination of forced labour: ILO Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (ratified by 175 states) and ILO Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour (ratified by 171 states).
3. Elimination of discrimination: ILO Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (ratified by 168 states) and ILO Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (ratified by 169 states).
4. Freedom of association and collective bargaining, including the right to strike: ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (ratified by 150 states) and ILO Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively (ratified by 160 states).

The Decent Work Agenda sums up ILO's overarching goal of promoting social justice by ensuring employment and decent

working conditions. This goal is pursued through four strategic objectives:

- Workers' rights: promote international labour standards and fundamental workers' rights.
- Employment: create opportunities for women and men to obtain decent work that provides them with a living, enables them to make investments, develops skills and promotes enterprise.
- Social protection: expand access to and the effect of social protection.
- Social dialogue: promote social dialogue and tripartite collaboration.

## Results achieved in 2012

ILO has succeeded in establishing its Decent Work Agenda as a key prerequisite for a socially sustainable global economy. The financial crisis and the ensuing economic and labour-markets crises that have affected many countries have given new relevance to ILO's mandate and sphere of activity. The organisation focuses on promoting economic growth that creates and is driven by jobs, not growth without jobs.

The Decent Work Agenda and ILO's Global Jobs Pact are backed by the entire UN system. The organisation played a key role when the ECOSOC meeting in July 2012 had growth, employment and decent work on the agenda. ILO's agenda has gained acceptance in G20, and ILO has entered into closer cooperation with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Norway has played an active role in this connection by promoting policy coherence.

ILO's primary task is to develop standards that ensure decent work and to assist member states in implementing these standards. Due to ILO's tripartite structure, the organisation is highly political. This is ILO's strength and distinguishes it from other UN organisations. Decision-making processes have their own dynamics, making them time-consuming, but on the other hand firmly grounded.

The 2011 International Labour Conference adopted a ground-breaking convention on decent work for domestic workers, i.e. persons working for private households. Moreover, ILO has a monitoring system designed to ensure compliance with standards, and a complaints mechanism for persons who are not granted the rights to which they are entitled.

The achievement of goals must be assessed over time, and outcomes are the result of a great many activities. ILO overviews show that the organisation collaborates with the government authorities and social partners in more than 180 countries to promote employment, social protection, social dialogue and fundamental principles and rights at work. ILO contributes resources for analyses, advisory services, capacity-building, partnership and direct support. Countries make use of this support to adopt legislation, review national policy and implement programmes and initiatives.

### ILO works to promote equal pay in Jordan

ILO has entered into a partnership with the national authorities in Jordan to reduce the gap between women's and men's pay in the country. This objective falls within the scope of ILO's efforts to eliminate discrimination in working life.

ILO has provided technical expertise to support the authorities' efforts, among other things by conducting a survey of the situation with regard to pay equity and by proposing improvement measures. These proposals are considered and followed up by national institutions, including workers and employer's organisations. The efforts to promote equal pay in Jordan are supported by Norway and other countries.

There is strong demand for ILO's services, and the organisation has active country programmes or is currently developing such programmes in 116 countries. These programmes are designed as an integral part of the UN's development work, and ILO attaches great importance to involving the

social partners in the country programmes more effectively. ILO itself reports on real progress made within the organisation's priority areas, which in turn promote concrete, genuine improvements for working men and women.

## 2. Assessments: Results, effectiveness and monitoring

### The organisation's results-related work

ILO focuses strongly on results. The organisation has made comprehensive efforts to improve and simplify its own governance and budgetary and reporting processes with a view to ensuring better, more effective governance and providing better documentation and information to member states.

Governance and results reporting are also simplified by ILO's strategic policy framework and structuring of contributions in accordance with this framework. Results are reported at both a general, aggregate level and for each of the thematic goals. Quantitative targets are supplemented by qualitative criteria. The strategic policy framework also makes it possible to provide more detailed information: for instance, Norway receives reports that specifically follow Norwegian contributions, through thematic goals, to concrete activities at country level.

### Planning and budgeting systems

ILO is governed through its Strategic Policy Framework 2010–2015. The policy framework is based on four strategic objectives and a matrix of 19 specific thematic outcomes. Two-year budgets and programmes are adopted within this framework. The current period is 2012–2013, and the budget and programme for 2014–2015 were adopted at the Governing Body meeting in March 2013 and the International Labour Conference in June of the same year. Programme reports are presented for the same two-year cycles.

Work plans for programmes and projects are based on the objectives and outcomes defined in the overall strategic framework. This helps to ensure better use of resources and expertise within the organisation, and links use of resources more clearly to specific outcomes and more general strategic objectives.

Norway and other major donor countries have also structured their contributions in accordance with ILO's strategic policy

framework by earmarking and tying them loosely to various thematic outcomes. This helps to give ILO a greater degree of flexibility in formulating and implementing concrete programmes under the strategic policy framework.

### Oversight systems and anti-corruption

ILO has established an anti-corruption and anti-fraud policy. The organisation has internal as well as external audit and control mechanisms, and a special Evaluation Unit reports annually to the Governing Body. Furthermore, an Independent Oversight Committee has been established; its mandate has been reviewed to improve its supervisory and oversight work. ILO also has an Ethics Officer, whose responsibilities include protecting whistle-blowers, and an Office of the Mediator, tasked with resolving work-related issues through mediation for anyone with a contractual relationship with ILO.

### Institution-building and national ownership

ILO's development cooperation is based on national ownership and grounded in national demand for ILO services, a demand that is described as strong. In addition to working closely with the governments of various countries, ILO also attaches considerable weight to including the social partners, based on the tripartite approach that is the hallmark of all ILO activity. Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) are drawn up in collaboration with governments and employee and employers' organisations.

### Willingness to learn and change

Norway has long been an active supporter of ILO's efforts to restructure, simplify and improve its internal governance and budgetary and reporting processes. ILO shows a great willingness and ability to improve. While further efforts are still needed, this work has had a positive effect, particularly in ILO's reporting and communications activities.

### 3. Norway's policy towards ILO

Norway's policy towards ILO is a key element of efforts to promote decent work in Norwegian foreign, development, trade and working-life policies. The Norwegian Government also places great emphasis on promoting greater policy coherence at global and national level in the approach to decent work.

ILO has succeeded in establishing its Decent Work Agenda as a major prerequisite for a fair and socially sustainable global economy. The agenda is of particular relevance for Norway and is given growing priority in development cooperation as well. ILO's activities are also well aligned with Norway's focus on rights and development. Higher priority is being given to increased employment, social protection, social dialogue and standards and rights at work in efforts to promote sustainable economic growth in developing countries.

Norway has a four-year programme cooperation agreement with ILO for the period 2012–2015, and has entered into several additional agreements to provide support for thematic or country-specific projects or programmes. Norway's cooperation with ILO is particularly focused on strengthening the social partners, labour administration and labour inspection, the right to freedom of organisation and collective bargaining and international policy coherence. The support provided also includes follow-up of the focus on HIV and AIDS in the world of work. Furthermore, Norway is an active advocate of making gender equality one of the main topics in the Decent Work Agenda.

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