



Global shortage of health care staff

The global health care profession employs an estimated 100 million people, but is failing to attract enough new recruits in both developed and developing countries alike. Across the European Union, more than half of the doctors in 2000 were over 45. In the United States, a 20% deficit in healthcare staff is predicted by 2020 if current trends are not reversed. So fierce is the competition to secure scarce health care professionals that private recruitment agencies



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stage promotional events and aggressive recruitment campaigns in supplying countries. A recent ILO study, available [here](#), analyses this trend. It notes that while remittances generated by migrants are a source of national income for poorer countries, they do not sufficiently compensate governments for their investment in the education and training of health care workers. A feature service article on this issue is available on the ILO website (click [here](#)).

ILO Governing Body

At its meeting in Geneva in March, the ILO Governing Body focused in particular on violations of the freedom of association in Belarus and Nepal. In the case of Belarus, the Governing Body expressed its deep concern that, rather than implementing the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry set up by the ILO in 2004, the Government was on a path to eliminating all remnants of an independent trade union. The Government member of Finland, representing the European Union, said that the European Commission had launched a procedure that could deprive Belarus of the benefits of the Generalised System of Preferences. The Governing Body also considered violations of the freedom of association following the coup d'état by the King of Nepal in February 2005 when a state of emergency was declared and all civil liberties consequently suspended. Several union leaders were arrested and the resulting climate of fear forced many Nepalese trade unionists into exile.

Special guest Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, addressed the meeting on 27 March and stressed the importance of the strategic partnership signed in 2004 between the European Union and the ILO. Mr Michel noted that international consensus now exists on the fact that productive employment and decent work, as defined by the ILO, are effective tools in combating poverty and boosting sustainable development. He told the Governing Body that he intends to propose a new initiative to the Commission and the ACP-EU Council in a bid to urge all companies active in ACP countries to respect basic ethical standards. The initiative would include measures to promote implementation of the ILO Conventions.

Mr Michel's statement at the ILO Governing Body is [available here](#) (in French) and a press release ([click here](#)) provides further information on this session of the Board.

Football without child labour

With the World Cup approaching fast, the ILO has recently published a brochure on combating child labour in soccer ball factories in the Sialkot district of Pakistan. An ILO project running since 1997 has helped significantly in changing the attitudes of parents, authorities and employers in this district and making them realise how important education is



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to every child's future. Over 95% of soccer ball production lines in the area now operate without child labour and over 10,000 young people have been supported in their studies since the project began. The brochure, available [here](#), provides more information about this successful project and offers suggestions for other actions to abolish child labour in other countries or sectors.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work



As every year, 28 April 2006 will mark the World Day for Safety and Health at Work. The day aims to focus international attention on promoting and creating decent, safe jobs and reducing the number of work-related deaths. This year, the ILO will highlight the link between HIV/AIDS, decent work and working in safety. Click [here](#) to access a report on the ILO website which provides more information on this issue.

Tripartite events will be held across the world to mark World Day for Safety and Health at Work. In Belgium, the ILO, together with Belgium's three trade union confederations, will take part in a commemoration of the Bois du Cazier coal mining disaster in Marcinelle (south of Charleroi), on the morning of 28 April.

Migration for better development

At an interregional dialogue session for Africa and Europe organised by the ILO in Brussels on 4-6 April 2006, 70 high-level government officials and leaders of African and European employers' and workers' organisations examined ways of making labour migration contribute to integration and development. The meeting was the culmination of a three-year programme, supported by the European Union, involving research, regional tripartite meetings and the development of interregional partnerships. This ILO/EU programme has already led to the adoption of new legislation in several African countries and the creation of tripartite migration mechanisms in 12 countries.

The participants in the interregional dialogue adopted a roadmap containing recommendations aimed at fostering joint actions by governments and social partners in Africa and Europe. In particular, they aim to advance ratification of ILO Conventions, boost worker mobility within Africa and enhance training opportunities in countries of origin in order to better meet domestic and international needs. The meeting's conclusions can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Global Report on Child Labour

The second Global Report on Child Labour, produced as a follow-up to the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, will be launched on 4 May 2006 in 10 capital cities, including Brussels. After years of global campaigning and efforts to mobilise civil society, this report provides an overview of the child labour situation in the world, reviews the progress made, outlines the main challenges still to be overcome, lists action required and sets realistic objectives for the total elimination of the worst forms of child labour. Further information about this report will be provided in next month's newsletter.

Scheduled meetings

Please click [here](#) for a list of ILO meetings scheduled for 2006 and 2007.

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