



Decent work - Safe work - HIV/AIDS

ILO Report for World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2006

ILO Statement

on the occasion of
the launch of the new Twinning project
"Development of Occupational Health and
Safety System" and
The ILO Tripartite Labour Inspection Audit
in Latvia



Launch of the new Twinning Project in Latvia- World Day for Safety and Health at Work- Labour Inspection Audit

Geneva, 24.04.2006

“The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for men and women to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.”

Juan Somavia, ILO Director-General

The ILO latest estimates show that 2.2 million workers lose their lives at work every year. It is sad but true: Work kills more people than wars. And this despite the fact that, safety and health at work is not only a sound economic policy, it is a basic human right.

To fight for this right, we need a global alliance of developed and developing countries to achieve this common goal for safer and healthier work. A fundamental pillar to put this into practice is promotion and advocacy. The World Day for Safety and Health at Work has been endorsed by the social partners as a key event and is marked in over 100 countries on 28 April each year. The promotion of this day and high-level commitment at national level is essential in arranging the activities of this day. The Day is a response to reduce these fatalities and to move towards a safer and healthier workplace. It is intended to focus international attention on promoting and creating decent, safe work, recognizing that health and safety is a concern of everyone at work. ILO's Decent Work Agenda embraces occupational safety and health as a core element, because everyone has the right to a safe and healthy workplace and because safe workplaces are also more productive and competitive.

This year's World Day puts emphasis on eliminating workplace stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS and to the establishment of National SafeWork programmes, a medium term national action programme for safety and health at work that has measurable targets, one of them being labour inspection.

The launch of the new TWINNING project comes at a time where Latvia just underwent a tripartite ILO labour inspection audit, in order to assess their needs and gain insights on how to improve their occupational health and safety system.

Labour inspection services play an important part in ILO's overall strategy of Decent Work. Labour inspectors are the only public officials who have the right of free entry to the workplace at any time of day and night. The enforcement of legal provisions, especially concerning safety and health at work and working conditions is a powerful tool for initiating change and taking innovations straight into the heart of business. The ILO will present a new global survey on labour inspection during its International Labour Conference in June 2006, which calls for the strengthening of labour inspection and for a worldwide labour inspection campaign.

Furthermore, inspection and enforcement issues will be discussed in the occupational safety and health committee of the ILO Conference with a view to adopt new instruments on the "Promotional Framework"

ILO welcomes Latvia's commitment to giving a new face to its inspection services, based on ILO's audit recommendations. Moreover, the EU TWINNING project adds value to the ILO tripartite audit as the recommendations given can now be followed-up by competent labour inspection and occupational safety and health experts.

This is but one example how ILO and EU take joint action in order to improve working conditions in both their Member States and to work towards the same goal, namely that

work must be safe, and decent.

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