

# Methodological considerations when conducting a time-use survey

## Modular time-use measurement in labour force surveys

International Workshop on Time-Use Statistics  
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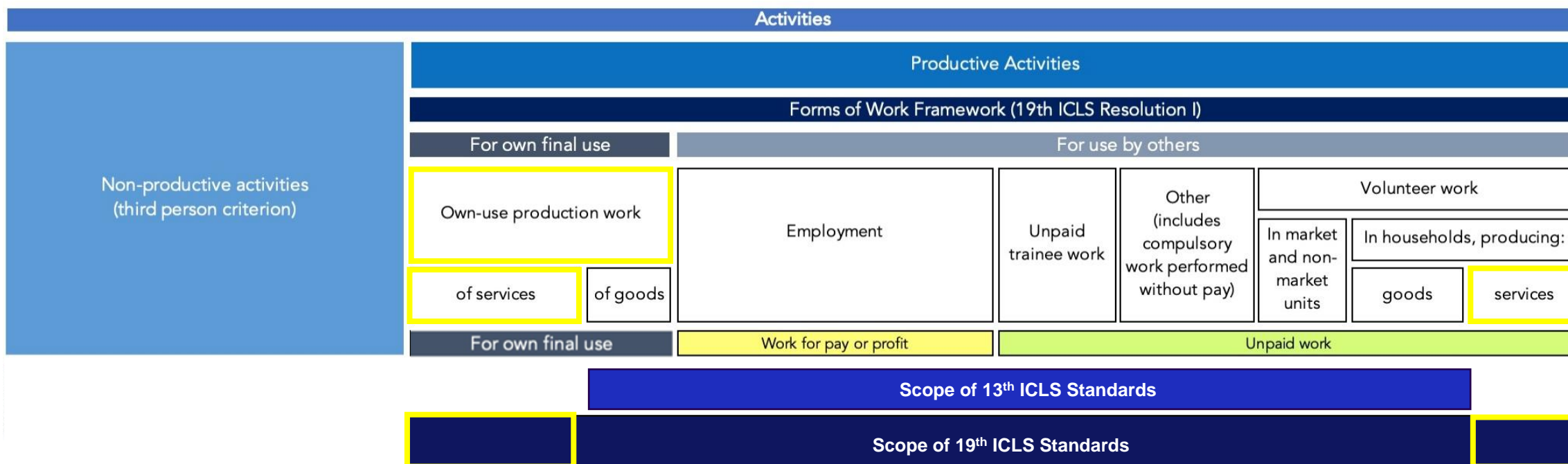
# ► Methodological considerations: Modular time-use measurement in LFS

## Overview

- Conceptual and methodological developments guiding measurement of OPS work
- Statistical indicators
- Module design, development, and testing
- Features of the new LFS add-on time-use modules
- Available support and resources

## Measurement of own-use provision of services work in national LFS

*“Work comprises any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use”*



## Measurement of own-use provision of services work in national LFS

### ■ Own-use production of goods

- (i) producing and/or processing for storage agricultural, fishing, hunting and gathering products;
- (ii) collecting and/or processing for storage mining and forestry products, including firewood and other fuels;
- (iii) fetching water from natural and other sources;
- (iv) manufacturing household goods (such as furniture, textiles, clothing, footwear, pottery or other durables, including boats and canoes);
- (v) building, or effecting major repairs to, one's own dwelling, farm buildings, etc.

**Reference period:** Four weeks or one calendar month (performed activity for at least one hour)

### ■ Own-use provision of services

- (i) household accounting and management, purchasing and/or transporting goods;
- (ii) preparing and/or serving meals;
- (iii) cleaning, decorating and maintaining one's own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods, household waste disposal and recycling, gardening, transporting and caring for domestic animals or pets;
- (iv) childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members, etc.

### ■ For own final use

...production where the intended destination of the output is **mainly** for final use...or final consumption by household members, **or by family members living in other households**

**Reference period:** One or more 24-hour days within a seven day or one week period.

## Measurement of own-use provision of services work in national LFS

19th ICLS forms of work framework: Own-use provision of services, Activity clusters		Corresponding ICATUS-16 Major Divisions and Divisions
(i) Household purchasing		<b>ICATUS Major Division 3: Unpaid domestic services for household and family members</b> <b>ICATUS Divisions at 2-digit (3_)</b> 35: Household management for own final use
	(ii) Preparing and/or serving meals	<b>ICATUS Major Division 3: Unpaid domestic services for household and family members</b> <b>ICATUS Divisions at 2-digit (3_)</b> 31: Food and meals management and preparation 39: Other unpaid domestic services for household and family members
	(iii) Cleaning, decorating, maintaining one's own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods, household waste disposal and recycling, gardening, etc.	<b>ICATUS Major Division 3: Unpaid domestic services for household and family members</b> <b>ICATUS Divisions at 2-digit (3_)</b> 32: Cleaning and maintenance of own dwelling and surroundings 33: Do-it-yourself decoration, maintenance, and repair
	(iv) Childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members, etc.	<b>ICATUS Major Division 4: Unpaid caregiving services for household and family members</b> <b>ICATUS Divisions (4_)</b> 41: Childcare and instruction 42: Care for dependent adults 43: Help for non-dependent adult household and family members 44: Travelling and accompanying goods or persons related to unpaid caregiving services for household and family members 49: Other activities related to unpaid caregiving services for household and family members

In October 2023, the **21st ICLS** endorsed revisions to Resolution I of the 19th ICLS to remedy small but non-trivial differences with ICATUS-16 and to clarify the reference period for the measurement of OPS work.

- These important methodological updates are reflected in the LFS OPS modules



## Recommended statistical indicators (19th ICLS, Resolution I)

### Resolution I

#### Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization

#### Preamble

The 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having reviewed the relevant texts of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1982) and the amendment of its paragraph 5 adopted by the 18th Conference (2008); the resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations adopted by the 16th Conference (1990), as well as the guidelines endorsed therein concerning treatment in employment and unemployment statistics of persons on extended absences from work; and the guidelines on the implications of employment promotion schemes on the measurement of employment and unemployment, endorsed by the 14th Conference (1987),

Recalling the requirements of the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160), and the accompanying Labour Statistics Recommendation, 1985 (No. 170), and the need for coherence with other international statistical standards, particularly regarding the system of national accounts, working time, employment-related income, child labour, status in employment and work in the informal economy,

Recognizing the need to revise and broaden the existing standards in order to enable better statistical measurement of participation of all persons in all forms of work and in all sectors of the economy, of labour underutilization, and of interactions between different forms of work, as well as to provide guidelines on a wider set of measures than previously defined internationally, thereby enhancing the relevance and usefulness of the standards for countries and territories<sup>1</sup> at all stages of development,

Calling attention to the usefulness of these standards to enhance the international comparability of the statistics, to their contribution to the measurement of decent work and of well-being of households and society in general, thereby supporting and facilitating the post-2015 development agenda, as well as to the achievement of gender justice,

Acknowledging that the relevance of measures of work in a given country will depend on the nature of its society, labour markets and all user needs, and that their implementation will therefore, to a certain extent, be determined by national circumstances,

Adopts this 11th day of October 2013 the following resolution in substitution for the resolutions of 1982 and of 2008, and for paragraphs 9(1) and 9(1) of the resolution of 1990, as well as for the guidelines from 1987 and 1990 cited above.

#### Objectives and scope

1. This resolution aims to set standards for work statistics to guide countries in updating and integrating their existing statistical programmes in this field. It defines the statistical concept of work for reference purposes and provides operational concepts, definitions and guidelines for:

- (a) distinct rubrics of work activities, referred to as *forms of work*;
- (b) related classifications of the population according to their *labour force status and main form of work*;
- (c) measures of labour underutilization.

<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter referred to as "countries".

71. A set of indicators that serves the principal objectives of the statistics should be selected by countries for dissemination according to the relevant reporting periodicities, as recommended in paragraph 56. Indicators should be computed for the population as a whole and disaggregated by sex, specified age groups (including separate categories for youth), level of educational attainment, geographic region, urban and rural areas, and other relevant characteristics taking account of the statistical precision of the estimates.

74. Indicators for the population of working age in own-use production work, in unpaid trainee work and in volunteer work include:

- (a) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by activity cluster of own-use producers of goods;
- (b) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by activity cluster of own-use providers of services;
- (c) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by programme type of unpaid trainees;
- (d) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by type of economic unit (market units/non-market units/households) of volunteer workers.

## ► Recommended topics for data collection

- The LFS add-on modules measure OPS **within a full accounting of daily time-use**, to guard against known measurement issues encountered when data collection is restricted by domain(s)
- Recommended topics for data collection using the LFS add-on module include:
  - ❖ Time use activities (comprehensive domain coverage, aligned to ICATUS-16)
    - *Recommended, but optional for countries: Simultaneous activities (comprehensive domain coverage)*
  - ❖ Duration of activities in minutes and hours
  - ❖ Contextual data (conditioned by activity)
    - ✓ Location / travel purpose
    - ✓ Co-presence
    - ✓ Beneficiary type
    - ✓ Market orientation
    - *Countries may wish to consider additional items: ICT use, affect / wellbeing, mode of transport (for reported travel episodes)*
  - ❖ Direct questions on passive/supervisory care for household and family members

## ► Recommended sampling and field operations approach

- **Bar on proxy response for the OPS module**
  - Probabilistically sampled individual(s) *must* respond directly for the OPS module (wide variation in country practices for core LFS)
  - May increase the number of re-visits required to obtain a response
- **Inclusion of “time dimension” in the sample design for the time use module**
  - Probabilistic assignment of response units to a designated “diary” day to:
    - i. Achieve a representative sample of days of the week
    - ii. Avoid selection bias (“convenient-day” may systematically differ from other days)
    - iii. Permit probabilities of selection to be calculated
- **Probabilistic sampling of respondent(s) within households (as relevant)**
  - Minimum of one respondent per [selected] household probabilistically selected to respond to the OPS module
  - May increase the number of re-visits required to obtain response
  - Balance between analytical goals, survey costs, and statistical efficiency of the survey design
- **Strict adherence pits high response rates against inflated survey costs and complexity**
- Strategies for the recovery of pending interviews can resolve this tension (together with weights)




## LFS add-on modules: Key features

Feature		Summary details
Format		Hybrid light diary
Target population		Identical with population for labour force survey (working age population, 15 years old and above), no limitations imposed on labour force status or other characteristics
Mode		Face-to-face interviewer administered
Administrative	Activity timing	Fixed episodes (96 x 15-minute episodes)
Reference	Activity coding	Respondent narrates diary day verbatim. Interviewer selects from 41 pre-coded activities + "other, specify". Codes aligned to the UN International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS-16) coding scheme.
Pending re (recommen	Contextual items	Four <i>conditionally activated</i> contextual items (location, co-presence, beneficiary, market orientation) to support assignment to forms of work / ICATUS-16 major divisions
Responde	Treatment of supervisory / passive care	Dedicated recovery series activated on completion of the diary day. Separate items target supervision / passive care of children and adults
	Treatment of simultaneity / multi-tasking	Optional fields to record multiple activities as occurring simultaneously (i.e., during one or more of the same 15-minute episodes).

## LFS add-on modules: time-use diary (core)

slot	Closed episodes	OPS_1: Activity One		IF OPS_1 NE 1 (SLEEPING)	IF OPS_1B = 43 "NOTHING ELSE"		IF OPS_1 NE 41 "TRAVEL"	IF OPS_1 = 41 "TRAVEL"
		Thinking back to yesterday, what were you doing at 4am?		OPS_1B: Activity Two [OPTIONAL FOR COUNTRIES]			OPS_2: Location	OPS_2A: Travel reason
		...Until when?		Were you doing anything else at the same time as [OPS_1]?	<b>PROBED RESPONSE:</b> -ACTIVATES ONCE- "For instance, were you talking with a family member, friend, or neighbour, or [minding or watching over] a child, or listening to the radio or watching television..."	...Until when?	Where were you when you were [LDB_1]?	What was the <u>main</u> reason for this travel?
		Subsequent loops: What did you do next?					[FLAG ACTIVATES if location changes from one iteration of LDB_1 to another, in the absence of "Travel" episode]	
		CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU: pre-coded activities	DROP DOWN ROSTER: [15 minute closed episodes]	CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU: pre-coded activities	CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU: pre-coded activities	DROP DOWN ROSTER: [15 minute closed episodes]	CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU	CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU
1	04:00 - 04:15							
...	...							
96	03:45 - 04:00							

 Items recording simultaneity, optional for countries

### Key features

- 24-hour reference (=>1 'diary days')
- 41 pre-coded activities aligned to ICATUS
- Closed time slots
- Accommodates simultaneity
- Accommodates context
- Designed for interviewer administration
- Filled retrospectively (diary day +1)
- CAPI routing streamlines navigation
- Minimises respondent burden
- Minimises processing time

## LFS add-on modules: time-use diary (recovery of supervisory care time)

Hour			IF RSC_1 = 01 (YES)			IF RSB_C = 01 (YES)		
			Supervisory care, children			Supervisory care, adults		
			RSC_1	RSC_2	RSC_3	RSC_4	RSC_5	RSC_6
			Were there any times yesterday when you were <a href="#">[minding / watching over]</a> a child aged under 18, staying close by – <i>that is close enough to see or hear them</i> – and ready to respond in case of need?	When was that?	What was their relationship to you?	Were there any times yesterday when you were <a href="#">[minding / watching over]</a> an adult aged 18 or over who needs help with daily life, staying close by – <i>that is close enough to see or hear them</i> – and ready to respond in case of need?	When was that?	What was their relationship to you?
<b>CLOSED EPISODES:</b> 96 x 15 minute slots			<b>CODES:</b> 01: YES 02: NO 97: DON'T KNOW	<b>DROP DOWN ROSTER:</b> [15 Minute closed episodes <i>within OPS 1 Activity Blocks</i> ]	<b>CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU</b> (Multiple responses permitted)	<b>CODES:</b> 01: YES 02: NO 97: DON'T KNOW	<b>DROP DOWN ROSTER:</b> [15 Minute closed episodes <i>within OPS 1 Activity Blocks</i> ]	<b>CODE LIST DROP DOWN MENU</b> (Multiple responses permitted)
04:00	-	04:15						
...	-	...						
03:45	-	04:00						

## LFS add-on modules: Pre-coded activity listing

OPS_1 [OPS_1B]	ACTIVITY LISTING		
1	Sleeping or napping [OPS_1 ONLY]		
2	Personal hygiene and health		
3	Eating or drinking		
4	Cooking / baking / preparing / serving food or drinks / cleaning dishes)		
5	Manufacturing / processing foods, beverages, herbs, medicines, tobacco		
6	Cleaning and tidying indoors		
7	On	20	Waged or salaried employment / self-employment / paid traineeship
8	Pe	21	Helping without pay in a family or household business
9	De	22	Looking for paid work or setting up a new business
10	La	23	Unp
11	St	24	Volu
12	Pa	25	Stuc
13	Pr	26	Gro
14	Te	27	Ten
15	Pl	28	Gatl
16	At	29	Fetc
17	[M	30	Fish
18	Pr	31	Fore
19	[M	32	Con
		33	Wea
		34	Socializing, visiting with, talking to friends / family / neighbours
		35	Religious practice (individual or collective)
		36	Participating in community festivals, celebrations
		37	Attending cultural / entertainment / sports events
		38	Playing sports or doing exercise
		39	Watching tv shows, movies, online media / Reading for leisure / Listening to music, radio, podcasts, online audio
		40	Hobbies, games, pass-times (includes resting / relaxing, "doing nothing")
		41	Travelling or commuting / Transporting or accompanying people or goods [OPS_1 ONLY]
		42	Other: Specify
		43	NOTHING ELSE [OPS_1B ONLY]
		97	DON'T KNOW

## LFS add-on modules: Context items (location or reason for travel)

OPS_2	ACTIVITY LOCATION, CONSTRAINED TO ONE RESPONSE (DEACTIVATED IF OPS_1 ==41 OR OPS_2 ==8)	
99	[FOR SECC	OPS_2A
1	OWN HOME	REASON FOR TRAVEL, CONSTRAINED TO ONE RESPONSE (ACTIVATED IF OPS_1 ==41 OR OPS_2 ==8)
2	OTHER PEI	1 COMMUTING FOR WAGED OR SALARIED JOB, OWN/HOUSEHOLD BUSINESS
3	WORKPLAC	2 OTHER TRAVEL FOR WAGED OR SALARIED JOB, OWN/HOUSEHOLD BUSINESS
4	SCHOOL O	3 TRAVEL RELATED TO UNPAID TRAINEESHIP, VOLUNTEER WORK
5	RELIGIOUS	4 TRAVEL RELATED TO STUDIES
6	OTHER OU	5 TRAVEL RELATED TO GROWING CROPS/TENDING LIVESTOCK
7	OTHER IND	6 TRAVEL RELATED TO FETCHING WATER / GATHERING FIREWOOD, FUEL
8	IN TRANSIT	7 TRAVEL RELATED TO OTHER PRODUCTION OF GOODS ACTIVITIES
9	OTHER, SP	8 TRAVEL RELATED TO HOUSEHOLD SERVICES (SHOPPING, DOING LAUNDRY, PAYING BILLS, RUNNING ERRANDS...)
		9 DROPPING OFF / COLLECTING / ACCOMPANYING HOUSEHOLD OR FAMILY CHILDREN
		10 DROPPING OFF / COLLECTING / ACCOMPANYING ADULT HOUSEHOLD OR FAMILY MEMBERS
		11 TRAVEL RELATED TO SELF-CARE (MEAL BREAK, MEDICAL APPOINTMENT, HAIRDRESSER / SALON VISIT...)
		12 TRAVEL RELATED TO SOCIALISING
		13 TRAVEL RELATED TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
		14 TRAVEL RELATED TO CULTURE / LEISURE / SPORTS OR EXERCISE
		15 TRAVEL RELATED TO RELIGIOUS PRACTICE
		16 OTHER TRAVEL, SPECIFY



## LFS add-on modules: Context items (with whom, for whom, destination)

OPS_3	WITH WHOM	OPS_4 [OPS_6]	FOR WHOM (MAIN BENEFICIARY), CONSTRAINED TO ONE RESPONSE	OPS_5 [OPS_7]	MARKET ORIENTATION (DESTINATION OF PRODUCT), CONSTRAINED TO ONE RESPONSE
99	[FOR SECONI	99	[FOR SECONI		
a)	ALONE (INCLI	1	SELF	1	...Only for sale
b)	SPOUSE	2	HOUSEHOLD	2	...Mainly for sale
c)	OTHER ADUL	3	SPOUSE	3	...Mainly for family use
d)	OTHER ADUL	4	OTHER ADUL	4	...Only for family use
e)	OWN CHILD(F	5	OTHER ADUL	5	NONE OF THE ABOVE
f)	GRANDCHILD	6	OWN CHILD(		
g)	OTHER FAMIL	7	GRANDCHILD		
h)	OTHER CHIL	8	OTHER FAMI		
		9	OTHER CHIL		
		10	WAGED OR S		
		11	OWN-BUSINE		
		12	FOR A CHAR		
		13	HOUSEHOLD		
		14	HOUSEHOLD		
		15	WILD OR ST		
		16	OTHER, SPE		

# ILO resources for OPS measurement in national LFS



International  
Labour  
Organization

## ► Own-use provision of services: Measurement guide

Guidance on implementing the ILO add-on module for own-use provision of services in national labour force surveys.

ILO Department of Statistics  
November 2023



## Introducing the ILO light time-use module: a new tool to measure UDCW

► Save time. Reduce costs. Report better.

► Deployment ready

Meets current standards and guidance on time-use statistics:

ICLS | SNA | UN ICATUS | UNSD

► Tried and tested

Subjected to extensive field piloting

► Improved accuracy

24-hour 'yesterday recall' with 15-minute time slots

► Comprehensive domain coverage

Pre-coded activity listings, records multi-tasking

► Flexible reporting

Easily adapts to new contexts and diverse subjects

► Better data capture

Embedded quality controls, recall aids and recovery sections for hard-to-capture domains

Measurement guide - Guidance on implementing the ILO light time-use module

Based on our pilot project [Learn more](#)



International  
Labour  
Organization

Discover a simple, cost-effective, and comprehensive approach to measuring unpaid domestic and care work (UDCW).

## The LFS light time-use module

Developed by ILO's Statistical Standards and Methods Unit (SSMU), the LFS light time-use module is an innovative tool for UDCW data collection.

**FLEXIBLE REPORTING**

Early adapts to new contexts

**IMPROVED ACCURACY**

24-hour 'yesterday recall' with 15-minute time slots

**COMPREHENSIVE DOMAIN COVERAGE**

Pre-coded activity listings and multi-tasking

**BETTER DATA CAPTURE**

Embedded quality controls, recall aids and recovery sections for hard-to-capture domains

**DEPLOYMENT READY**

Meets current standards and guidance on time-use statistics ICLS - SNA - ICATUS-16

**TRIED AND TESTED**

Subjected to extensive field piloting

**SAVE TIME. REDUCE COSTS. REPORT BETTER.**

Every day, up to 16 billion hours are spent on unpaid domestic and care work activities, like cooking, cleaning, and caring for children and adults. Tracking hours spent on UDCW is imperative for countries to reduce inequalities, boost economies, and achieve global SDGs.

**16 BILLION HOURS**

We're here to help!

Contact SSMU at [statistics@ilo.org](mailto:statistics@ilo.org) for more information about our support services for statisticians and implementation guidance on new labour standards.

