

# R091 - Collective Agreements Recommendation, 1951 (No. 91)

## Recommendation concerning Collective Agreements

Adoption: Geneva, 34th ILC session (29 Jun 1951) - Status: Up-to-date instrument.

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### Preamble

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Thirty-fourth Session on 6 June 1951, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to collective agreements, which is included in the fifth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation designed to be implemented by the parties concerned or by the public authorities as may be appropriate under national conditions,

adopts this twenty-ninth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and fifty-one, the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Collective Agreements Recommendation, 1951:

### I. Collective Bargaining Machinery

1.

(1) Machinery appropriate to the conditions existing in each country should be established, by means of agreement or laws or regulations as may be appropriate under national conditions, to negotiate, conclude, revise and renew collective agreements, or to be available to assist the parties in the negotiation, conclusion, revision and renewal of collective agreements.

(2) The organisation, methods of operation and functions of such machinery should be determined by agreements between the parties or by national laws or regulations, as may be appropriate under national conditions.

### II. Definition of Collective Agreements

2.

(1) For the purpose of this Recommendation, the term **collective agreements** means all agreements in writing regarding working conditions and terms of employment concluded between an employer, a group of employers or one or more employers' organisations, on the one hand, and one or more representative workers' organisations, or, in the absence of such

organisations, the representatives of the workers duly elected and authorised by them in accordance with national laws and regulations, on the other.

(2) Nothing in the present definition should be interpreted as implying the recognition of any association of workers established, dominated or financed by employers or their representatives.

### **III. Effects of Collective Agreements**

3.

(1) Collective agreements should bind the signatories thereto and those on whose behalf the agreement is concluded. Employers and workers bound by a collective agreement should not be able to include in contracts of employment stipulations contrary to those contained in the collective agreement.

(2) Stipulations in such contracts of employment which are contrary to a collective agreement should be regarded as null and void and automatically replaced by the corresponding stipulations of the collective agreement.

(3) Stipulations in contracts of employment which are more favourable to the workers than those prescribed by a collective agreement should not be regarded as contrary to the collective agreement.

(4) If effective observance of the provisions of collective agreements is secured by the parties thereto, the provisions of the preceding subparagraphs should not be regarded as calling for legislative measures.

4. The stipulations of a collective agreement should apply to all workers of the classes concerned employed in the undertakings covered by the agreement unless the agreement specifically provides to the contrary.

### **IV. Extension of Collective Agreements**

5.

(1) Where appropriate, having regard to established collective bargaining practice, measures, to be determined by national laws or regulations and suited to the conditions of each country, should be taken to extend the application of all or certain stipulations of a collective agreement to all the employers and workers included within the industrial and territorial scope of the agreement.

(2) National laws or regulations may make the extension of a collective agreement subject to the following, among other, conditions;

(a) that the collective agreement already covers a number of the employers and workers concerned which is, in the opinion of the competent authority, sufficiently representative;

(b) that, as a general rule, the request for extension of the agreement shall be made by one or more organisations of workers or employers who are parties to the agreement;

(c) that, prior to the extension of the agreement, the employers and workers to whom the agreement would be made applicable by its extension should be given an opportunity to submit their observations.

### **V. Interpretation of Collective Agreements**

6. Disputes arising out of the interpretation of a collective agreement should be submitted to an appropriate procedure for settlement established either by agreement between the parties or by laws or regulations as may be appropriate under national conditions.

## VI. Supervision of Application of Collective Agreements

7. The supervision of the application of collective agreements should be ensured by the employers' and workers' organisations parties to such agreements or by the bodies existing in each country for this purpose or by bodies established ad hoc.

## VII. Miscellaneous

8. National laws or regulations may, among other things, make provision for--

- (a) requiring employers bound by collective agreements to take appropriate steps to bring to the notice of the workers concerned the texts of the collective agreements applicable to their undertakings;
- (b) the registration or deposit of collective agreements and any subsequent changes made therein;
- (c) a minimum period during which, in the absence of any provision to the contrary in the agreement, collective agreements shall be deemed to be binding unless revised or rescinded at an earlier date by the parties.

### See also

[Submissions to competent authorities by country](#)