



Governing Body

320th Session, Geneva, 13–27 March 2014

GB.320/INS/14/2

Institutional Section

INS

Date: 18 February 2014

Original: English

FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Director-General

Second Supplementary Report: Follow-up to the discussion on the dissolution of the International Institute for Labour Studies and the establishment of the central Research Department

Purpose of the document

Report on progress made in regard to the establishment of the Research Department.

Relevant strategic objective: Cross-cutting.

Policy implications: None.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: None.

Author unit: Office of the Director-General.

Related documents: GB.318/INS/6/1(Rev.); GB.319/PV/Draft; GB.319/INS/11; GB.320/PFA/6.

Introduction

1. At its 318th Session (June 2013) the Governing Body was informed of the Director-General's decision to create a central Research Department.¹ At its 319th Session (October 2013), the Governing Body decided to dissolve the International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) and merge its staff and resources into the new Department. In so doing, it invited the Director-General to present a progress report to the current Governing Body session on the implementation of the transition, including detailed information on organizational structure and human resources.²
2. The discussion at the 319th Session³ of the Governing Body provided important guidance to the Director-General in respect of the organization of the Research Department and the nature of its work. There was general approval of the intent to make the Department, together with the reinforced Department of Statistics, part of a Knowledge Resource Centre which would be a key instrument in elevating the ILO's research and analytical capacities to required levels of excellence. Views expressed in the Governing Body addressed in particular:
 - the need for organizational structures to ensure that the Research Department's work responds to the overall strategic requirements of the Organization, and for the Director-General to exercise effective oversight in the establishment and implementation of the research agenda;
 - the need for mechanisms to ensure the quality, objectivity and relevance of the work carried out and to allow the Governing Body to exercise its proper governance functions in respect of research activity; and
 - the need for functions previously carried out by the IILS to be maintained under the new arrangements.
3. In the light of this guidance the following action has been taken.

Composition of the Research Department

4. Following the Director-General's decision in June 2013 to establish the Research Department, the decisions taken by the Governing Body in October allowed the integration into it of the staff and resources previously available to the IILS. As a result, the Knowledge Resource Centre now comprises a total of 76/0 P work-years and 31/0 GS work-years.⁴
5. In November 2013, Mr Raymond Torres was appointed by the Director-General as Director of the Research Department.

¹ GB.318/INS/6/1(Rev.).

² GB.319/PV/Draft, para. 281. In accordance with the Governing Body's decision, a separate document (GB.320/PFA/6) concerning the disposition of IILS funds and assets is also before the Governing Body.

³ GB.319/PV/Draft, paras 260–280.

⁴ 76/0 work-years corresponds to 38 professional positions.

Organizational structure and reporting lines

6. The location of the Research Department in ILO structures and associated reporting arrangements must meet both the need for its work to connect fully to and serve technical policy units as a basis for the provision of sound evidence-based policy advice, and the need for research activities to be designed and implemented to respond to the strategic requirements of the organization. For these reasons the Research Department is located as part of the Knowledge Resource Centre reporting to the Deputy Director-General for Policy (DDG/P) for all technical and administrative purposes. In addition, and in order for the Director-General to be able to exercise full oversight and strategic direction, the Director of the Research Department reports directly to him concerning overall progress in implementation of the research agenda, and on major research and knowledge developments. The Director-General is also directly responsible for setting the research agenda.
7. The question of the future nature and arrangements for research work carried out in the regions and its relationship with the Research Department are still under consideration in the Field Operations Review.
8. The Research Department is continuing to operate the additional functions and activities formerly conducted by the ILS including its annual internship programme and the servicing of its networks of academic experts and partners as well as production of the *International Labour Review*. It is in the process of developing its collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin with a view to transforming areas of knowledge and research of the Department into learning products and tools.

Governance

9. The Governing Body will exercise its governance functions in respect of the research agenda through the programme and budget process for each biennium. The proposals presented by the Director-General will contain a specific section concerning research. For the initial 2014–15 period, the Director-General has taken into account the proposals presented to the 56th Session of the Board of the ILS and the comments made by the Board when preparing research priorities, as requested by the Governing Body in October 2013.⁵
10. In line with the discussion in the Governing Body, the Director-General is in the process of establishing a Research Review Group which will assist in assuring the quality, academic rigour and independence of the research undertaken by the Department. The Group will be composed of independent experts of recognized standing from academia or other research contexts and with due regard to regional balance. They will review periodically completed and ongoing work of the Department, advise the Director-General on all relevant matters including future areas of work and report periodically to the Governing Body.
11. ***The Governing Body is invited to take note of the developments reported.***

⁵ GB.319/PV/Draft, para. 242(a), and GB.319/INS/11.