

# Meeting of experts on policy guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood education personnel <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

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## Foreword

Many countries around the world are investing heavily in early childhood education (ECE) in view of evidence which has shown that early learning – when children’s minds are rapidly developing – can have an important positive influence on a child’s health, learning ability, and future job prospects. According to UNESCO, the worldwide gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education increased from 33 per cent in 1999 to 50 per cent in 2011.

In view of this trend, the ILO held a Global Dialogue Forum on Conditions of Personnel in Early Childhood Education in February 2012 in Geneva, at which Governments of ILO member States and Employer and Worker representatives recognized the importance of ECE, as well as the crucial role played by ECE personnel in ensuring universal access to quality early childhood education. Noting that ECE workers often worked under poorer conditions than educators in other levels of schooling, the Forum called for improvement of the status and working conditions of ECE personnel, and it requested the ILO Director-General to convene a meeting of experts to draw up guidelines on the promotion of decent work for ECE personnel.

Consequently, a Meeting of Experts on Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel was held in Geneva from 12 to 15 November 2013. Chaired by Mr Sammy Nyambari (Commissioner of Labour, Kenya), the meeting was attended by five experts nominated by the Governments of Argentina, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lebanon and South Africa and by five experts each nominated respectively by the Employers’ and Workers’ groups of the ILO Governing Body. Thirtyfour Government and ten Worker observers, as well as representatives of relevant intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), also took part in the discussions. On the basis of a draft prepared by the International Labour Office, and after four days of extensive discussion, the experts unanimously adopted the present Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel. The Guidelines were approved for publication and promotion by the ILO Governing Body at its 320th Session in March 2014.

The Guidelines are the first international text dealing specifically with the status of early childhood education personnel. The ILO is proud to be able to contribute to improving early childhood education worldwide by addressing the working conditions of the people who provide these crucial educational services. As many countries increase their investment in ECE services with a view to achieving pre-primary education goals and improving the lives of children, we fervently hope that these efforts will also lead to the improvement of working conditions and lives of ECE personnel.

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**Region:** International <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** child care workforce <sup>[5]</sup>

decent work <sup>[6]</sup>

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