



**DECLARATION
OF THE TENTH BRICS LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
MINISTERS' MEETING**

*9-10 September 2024,
Sochi, Russian Federation*

Introduction

1. We, the Ministers of Labour and Employment from the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of South Africa, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates convened in Sochi on 9-10 September 2024, for the Tenth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting to enhance BRICS cooperation in labour market development. We note the 15th BRICS Summit Leaders' decision to welcome the new BRICS member states the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
2. We commend the significant progress made by our countries in promoting high-quality and full employment through sustainable economic and social development, inclusive and human-centered labour markets environment and in fulfilling shared commitments from our previous meetings. Recognizing the imperative need to adapt to the evolving labour market challenges, we commit to developing comprehensive strategies for the promotion of life-long learning, vocational guidance, continuous professional education and vocational skills training, enhancing modernization of employment services, ensuring safe and healthy working environments, and bolstering robust social support mechanisms.

Development of a System of Vocational Guidance, Skills Training and Lifelong Professional Education for the Entire Population

3. Recognizing the rapidly changing world of work due to technological, economic and social transformations, we commit to promoting a resilient workforce equipped with the skills necessary for the future of work. To this end, we outline the following strategic initiatives to enhance vocational guidance, skills training and lifelong professional education for the entire population:
 - a) Develop and enhance career guidance systems that harness data analytics and emerging technologies to offer career counseling and skills development pathways tailored to individual needs and aligned with current and future market trends.
 - b) Strengthen the collaboration especially at sectoral level with education and training service providers, industry, private and public institutions, to ensure that vocational training programs are closely aligned with current and future labour market requirements.
 - c) Develop and promote access to digital platforms that offer a wide range of lifelong learning opportunities, from online training courses and workshops to extended reality including virtual simulations that provide practical experience in various fields.
 - d) Implement effective quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that all vocational education and training programs meet high standards through the accreditation of training providers and programs based on their alignment with industry standards and their effectiveness in job placement and career development.
 - e) Promote national upskilling and reskilling initiatives including recognition of prior learning aimed at workers in industries most affected by mega transitions in the world of work. These programs will focus on critical skills, including digital literacy, technical capabilities, and soft skills like problem-solving and adaptability.
 - f) Expand in collaboration with private and public sector enterprises apprenticeship and internship programs that provide practical, on-the-job training, ensuring that trainees receive relevant and valuable

- work experience. The member states may refer to the ILO Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208).
- g) Ensure that economically-disadvantaged and vulnerable groups including women, youth, persons with disabilities, have equal access to vocational education and training programs in order to acquire the skills matched with the labour market needs through targeted outreach, needs-based financial aid, and support services to remove barriers to participation.
 - h) Provide financial incentives such as scholarships, grants, low-interest loans and paid education leave to individuals pursuing vocational education and training, particularly those from economically disadvantaged groups.
 - i) Encourage a variety of incentives, which may include, but are not limited to tax incentives, subsidies or other supports to businesses that actively participate in vocational training programs, carry out apprenticeships and internships that contribute to the reskilling and upskilling of the existing workforce.
 - j) Support and hold various vocational skills competitions suited to national conditions and characteristics in order to further strengthen the quality, relevance and attractiveness of the system and to promote its culture.
 - k) Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of skills policies and programs.
4. We pledge to continue our efforts in modernizing employment services to better facilitate job matching, career development, and skill enhancement. This includes upgrading national platforms to provide comprehensive career information, professional counselling and access to training opportunities tailored to the needs of our economies.

Platform Employment and the Challenges of its Regulation

5. The rise of platform employment is reshaping the labour market and the organization of work bringing both new opportunities and distinct challenges. We recognize the need to regulate platform work to ensure decent work in particular fair remuneration, social security, other labour protection and the improvement of working conditions for platform workers.

We will explore collaborative approaches to create frameworks that balance transformative changes with worker protection.

6. We will continue our efforts to improve policies and measures to promote the fair protection of platform workers in terms of working hours and conditions. We will set standards for maximum working hours, necessary breaks, and the right to disconnect to prevent work-related injuries and diseases.
7. We will strive to integrate platform workers into national social security systems to ensure they get access to necessary benefits and protections as workers in regular employment, including provisions for illness, disability, maternity benefits, employment protection and retirement, thereby promoting fair and dignified work for all.
8. We will harness the potential of platform employment to contribute to economic growth while ensuring that the workers engaged in this sector are protected, respected, and fairly compensated and promote cross-national cooperation among BRICS countries to share information including statistics, strategies, and best practices for regulating platform work.
9. We appreciate the fruitful outcomes achieved by the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes on platform employment, and expect further in-depth studies on platforms in member states in order to identify labour market changes, supply and demand needs and closer exchanges and cooperation on the topics of common interests.
10. We emphasize the importance of ensuring decent working conditions, including safe and healthy working environment and comprehensive social protection for platform workers. Therefore, we welcome the double discussion of a standard-setting item on decent work in the platform economy at the 113th and 114th sessions of the International Labour Conference.

Ensuring Safety and Healthy Working Environment and Social Protection for Workers

11. BRICS countries are committed to taking all relevant measures to significantly reduce the rates of occupational injuries and diseases. This includes promoting a preventative safety and health culture namely through the development of effective and resilient national occupational

safety and health (OSH) framework. We will strive to both prevent and mitigate workplace hazards and extend comprehensive and adequate social protection for workers.

12. We commit to promote, respect and realize the right to a safe and healthy working environment as set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work with special attention to women, while taking into account training and working conditions that assure women welfare, mental and physical health.
13. We commit to strengthening OSH regulatory framework, particularly in industries experiencing rapid technological change, and improve their enforcement through labour inspectorates and other relevant institutions. This includes training inspectors in the latest OSH practices and equipping them with tools, including modern technologies to proactively predict potential safety and health issues before they lead to injuries or diseases.
14. We are committed to developing strategies to adjust workplace accidents and diseases prevention and control measures in response to the challenges posed by climate change. This includes preparing for increased risks such as heat stress and environmental disasters affecting working conditions.
15. We are committed to promoting a culture of safer and healthier working environments by educating employers and workers about their rights and responsibilities, the importance of compliance with safety and health protocols, and the benefits of investing in workers' health.
16. We will endeavor to expand and enhance social insurance programs to all workers in all forms of employment and ensure that these programs are accessible and provide adequate protection against workplace injuries, illness and unemployment.
17. To facilitate the exchange of OSH knowledge and best practices, we agree to establish the BRICS OSH Network. This network will serve as a platform for collaboration among government agencies, industry experts, and research institutions across our countries.
18. The BRICS OSH Network will focus on the development of safety and health guidelines, aligned with international labour standards, conduct joint research initiatives and secure data sharing, and organize regular forums and workshops to discuss advancements and challenges in OSH.

Development of Social Support for the BRICS Countries: Modern Tools of Social Policy

19. Recognizing the critical role that robust social support systems play in promoting economic stability and enhancing the quality of life, we commit to advancing social policies that protect and empower our populations. We aim to adapt and innovate in our approaches to social support to meet the diverse needs of our populations.
20. We commit to the development and promotion of social insurance instruments tailored to the needs of the self-employed, covering maternity benefits and risks associated with disability, and work-related accidents and diseases. These instruments will provide access to social security, ensuring stability and support for self-employed workers.
21. We will implement protection for those who report breaches of labour law obligations to encourage the reporting of abuses and to safeguard those who help enforce compliance as informed by the ILO Guidelines on General Principles of Labour Inspection.
22. We recognize the joint initiatives among BRICS countries such as 2017 BRICS Social Security Cooperation Framework and the BRICS Social Security Virtual Liaison Office (supported by the ILO and the ISSA) to share best practices and co-develop solutions to common social challenges. We shall promote cooperative research projects, policy exchanges, and development of mechanisms for social programs so that all workers, irrespective of their employment status, enjoy a decent standard of living and adequate protection against social risks.

Way Forward

23. We will present this Declaration to the BRICS Summit for our Leaders' consideration, and recommend that they endorse our commitments to fostering a labour market that is inclusive, competitive and enabling safe and healthy working environments. By adopting these initiatives, we aim to ensure that our labour and social protection policies and systems reflect the needs of our workers and the realities of the global economy.

We look forward to collaborative efforts and shared progress in these vital areas.

24. We will take further efforts to move forward the BRICS Platform on Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work to bolster the exchange of knowledge and information on the design of coherent, inclusive, and sustainable policies that enhance productivity, improve working conditions, and create quality employment. South Africa will continue to lead and facilitate this work under the Brazilian Presidency.
25. We welcome the valuable contribution of social partners and their input to inclusive labour market development and we aim to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.
26. We are grateful for the expertise and technical assistance provided by the ILO and the ISSA and will continue our cooperation with them.
27. We thank the Russian Federation for its leadership in organizing the Tenth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting and the Employment Working Group meetings and look forward to our next meeting in 2025 under the Presidency of the Federative Republic of Brazil.