

Base Code

ETHICAL TRADING INITIATIVE



1 THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP IS CHOSEN FREELY

- 1.1 There shall be no forced labour, slavery or involuntary prison labour.
- 1.2 Workers are not requested to deposit a “security” or their identification documents with their employer and they are free to leave the employer after reasonable notification.

2. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND THE RIGHT OF COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATION SHALL BE RESPECTED

- 2.1. Without exception, workers shall have the right of assembly and the right to found a labour union of their choice and to participate in collective wage negotiations.
- 2.2. The employer shall have an open approach towards union activities as well as the unions’ organisational activities.
- 2.3. Workers’ representatives shall not be discriminated against and shall be able to carry out their representative duties at the workplace.
- 2.4. Where the right of association and the right of collective negotiation are restricted by law, the employer shall facilitate the development of equitable means for independent and free association and negotiation and shall not impede these.

3. WORKING CONDITIONS ARE SAFE AND HYGIENIC

- 3.1. It must be ensured that the working environment is safe and hygienic with regard to general knowledge of the industry and specific dangers. Appropriated measures shall be taken to prevent accidents and damage to workers’ health that might occur in the context of the work, be related to or caused by the work. This shall be achieved by minimising dangers within the working environment as far as this is reasonably feasible.
- 3.2. Workers shall receive regular and recorded health and safety training. This training shall be repeated for new or re-hired employees.
- 3.3. Access to clean sanitary facilities and drinkable water shall be provided as well as food-storage facilities, where appropriate.
- 3.4. If accommodation is provided, it shall be clean and secure and it shall meet the workers’ basic needs.
- 3.5. A company that complies with these directives shall put a senior management representative in charge of health and safety issues.

4. THERE SHALL BE NO USE OF CHILD LABOUR

- 4.1. There shall be no use of child labour.
- 4.2. Companies shall develop or participate in policies and programmes to transfer any child found to be carrying out child labour to quality schooling and to provide for the children in question to remain in such schooling for the remainder of their childhood. The terms “child” and “child labour” are defined in the appendices.
- 4.3. Children and young people under the age of 18 shall not be appointed to work at night or under dangerous conditions.
- 4.4. These strategies and procedures shall correspond to the regulations according to the respective ILO standards.



5. PAYMENT OF MINIMUM WAGES

- 5.1. Wages and salaries that are paid for a regular working week shall at least fulfil the national legal requirements or the industry standards, whichever of these is higher. In any case, wages shall always be sufficient to meet basic needs and to provide for a certain amount of disposable income.
- 5.2. All workers shall receive written and comprehensible information about their working conditions regarding wages before taking up work as well as information regarding the wages for the period considered with each payment.
- 5.3. There shall be no wage deductions as a form of disciplinary measures and there shall be no wage deductions that are not permitted pursuant to national legislation, unless the worker in question explicitly agrees to such deductions. Any disciplinary measures shall be recorded.

6. NO EXCESS WORKING HOURS

- 6.1. Working hours shall correspond to national legislation and industry standards, whichever provides for greater protection.
- 6.2. In any case, workers shall not be requested to regularly work for more than 48 hours a week and shall on average have at least one day off in every 7-day period. Where extra hours of work are performed, these shall not be in excess of 12 hours per week and shall be remunerated with an overtime surcharge.

7. THERE SHALL BE NO DISCRIMINATION

- 7.1. No discrimination shall be practised in regard to hiring, remunerating, approval for training, promotions, terminations of working relationships or retirements based on an individual's race, caste, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

8. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS SHALL BE REGULAR

- 8.1. Where possible, work shall be carried out based on recognised working relationships that shall be established based on national legislation and practical application.
- 8.2. Obligations towards employers that occur through labour or social insurance law and regulations regarding regular working relationships, shall not be avoided through the use of pure labour contracts, subcontracting or home-based work or through apprenticeships without the intention of teaching skills or providing a regular working relationship, nor shall such obligations be avoided through an excess use of temporary work contracts.

9. THERE SHALL BE NO INHUMANE OR VIOLENT TREATMENT

- 9.1. There shall be no physical abuse of discipline, threats of physical abuse, sexual or other forms of harassment and verbal abuse or any other forms of intimidation.

The provisions of this code are meant to define minimum standards, not maximum requirements. They shall not be used to discourage companies from improving these standards. Companies that comply to this code are expected to conform to national and other applicable laws and to apply the regulations which provide for the greater degree of protection, where issues addressed by legislation and the Base Code coincide.

