

## R188 Private Employment Agencies Recommendation, 1997

Recommendation concerning Private Employment Agencies  
Recommendation:R188  
Place:Geneva  
Session of the Conference:85  
Date of adoption=19:06:1997  
Subject classification: Employment Services - Job Placement  
Subject: **Employment policy and Promotion**

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Eighty-fifth Session on 3 June 1997, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the revision of the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation supplementing the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997;

adopts, this nineteenth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven, the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Private Employment Agencies Recommendation, 1997:

### I. General provisions

1. The provisions of this Recommendation supplement those of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997, (referred to as "the Convention") and should be applied in conjunction with them.

2. (1) Tripartite bodies or organizations of employers and workers should be involved as far as possible in the formulation and implementation of provisions to give effect to the Convention

(2) Where appropriate, national laws and regulations applicable to private employment agencies should be supplemented by technical standards, guidelines, codes of ethics, self-regulatory mechanisms or other means consistent with national practice.

3. Members should, as may be appropriate and practicable, exchange information and experiences on the contributions of private employment agencies to the functioning of the labour market and communicate this to the International Labour Office.

### II. Protection of workers

4. Members should adopt all necessary and appropriate measures to prevent and to eliminate unethical practices by private employment agencies. These

measures may include laws or regulations which provide for penalties, including prohibition of private employment agencies engaging in unethical practices.

5. Workers employed by private employment agencies as defined in Article 1.1(b) of the Convention should, where appropriate, have a written contract of employment specifying their terms and conditions of employment. As a minimum requirement, these workers should be informed of their conditions of employment before the effective beginning of their assignment.

6. Private employment agencies should not make workers available to a user enterprise to replace workers of that enterprise who are on strike.

7. The competent authority should combat unfair advertising practices and misleading advertisements, including advertisements for non-existent jobs.

8. Private employment agencies should:

(a) not knowingly recruit, place or employ workers for jobs involving unacceptable hazards or risks or where they may be subjected to abuse or discriminatory treatment of any kind;

(b) inform migrant workers, as far as possible in their own language or in a language with which they are familiar, of the nature of the position offered and the applicable terms and conditions of employment.

9. Private employment agencies should be prohibited, or by other means prevented, from drawing up and publishing vacancy notices or offers of employment in ways that directly or indirectly result in discrimination on grounds such as race, colour, sex, age, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, ethnic origin, disability, marital or family status, sexual orientation or membership of a workers organization.

10. Private employment agencies should be encouraged to promote equality in employment through affirmative action programmes.

11. Private employment agencies should be prohibited from recording, in files or registers, personal data which are not required for judging the aptitude of applicants for jobs for which they are being or could be considered.

12. (1) Private employment agencies should store the personal data of a worker only for so long as it is justified by the specific purposes for which they have been collected, or so long as the worker wishes to remain on a list of potential job candidates.

(2) Measures should be taken to ensure that workers have access to all their personal data as processed by automated or electronic systems, or kept in a manual file. These measures should include the right of workers to obtain and examine a copy of any such data and the right to demand that incorrect or incomplete data be deleted or corrected.

(3) Unless directly relevant to the requirements of a particular occupation and with the express permission of the worker concerned, private employment agencies should not require, maintain or use information on the medical status

of a worker, or use such information to determine the suitability of a worker for employment.

13. Private employment agencies and the competent authority should take measures to promote the utilization of proper, fair and efficient selection methods.

14. Private employment agencies should have properly qualified and trained staff.

15. Having due regard to the rights and duties laid down in national law concerning termination of contracts of employment, private employment agencies providing the services referred to in paragraph 1(b) of Article 1 of the Convention should not:

(a) prevent the user enterprise from hiring an employee of the agency assigned to it;

(b) restrict the occupational mobility of an employee;

(c) impose penalties on an employee accepting employment in another enterprise.

III. Relationship between the public employment service and private employment agencies

16. Cooperation between the public employment service and private employment agencies in relation to the implementation of a national policy on organizing the labour market should be encouraged; for this purpose, bodies may be established that include representatives of the public employment service and private employment agencies, as well as of the most representative organizations of employers and workers.

17. Measures to promote cooperation between the public employment service and private employment agencies could include:

(a) pooling of information and use of common terminology so as to improve transparency of labour market functioning;

(b) exchanging vacancy notices;

(c) launching of joint projects, for example in training;

(d) concluding agreements between the public employment service and private employment agencies regarding the execution of certain activities, such as projects for the integration of the long-term unemployed;

(e) training of staff;

(f) consulting regularly with a view to improving professional practices.

**Cross****references**

Conventions: C096 Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949  
Supplemented: C181 Complementary to the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997